DEACTIVATED - P6 • MY BREAK WITH ZIONISM - P10 • NEW FOOD COLUMN - P26

THE INDYPENDENT 25
#298 OCTOBER 2025

25

2000 2025

YEARS OF THE INDY

AND WHAT COMES NEXT

COVERAGE BEGINS P2 • P14-20

WWW.INDYPENDENT.ORG

THE INDYPENDENT 25

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE NEXT STEP

WITHIN A HALF-HOUR *of Andrew Cuomo conceding his Democratic primary defeat to Zohran Mamdani, Kathryn Wylde, CEO of the pro-business Partnership for New York City, was being bombarded with text messages from panicked billionaires. They had never seriously considered that a 33-year-old democratic socialist could topple the candidate that they had poured tens of millions of dollars into supporting. Now reality was crashing in on them.*

Her wealthy friends were "terrified," Wylde said.

New York's stunned business titans could have saved themselves a lot of money (and heartache) by reading this humble newspaper. But that's okay, we're not here to serve the rich and powerful anyway.

For the past 25 years, The Indypendent *has acted from the belief that real change comes from the bottom-up not the top-down, that policies should be seen through the eyes of those most affected by them and the future is not simply destined to be more of what has come before.*

In the case of Mamdani, we had been closely following his career from his first run for office in 2020 and in our January 2025 cover story noted that he was deftly repacking socialism as the cure to inflation with topline proposals to freeze the rent and deliver fast and free busses and universal childcare up to age 5.

Mamdani is almost certain to become New York's next mayor on January 1. When he does so, the world will be watching. It will be a moment filled with possibilities and fraught with peril. Will he and the upstart movements that propelled him into office be able to carry out their agenda and in the process demonstrate that the left can govern successfully? Or will they be derailed by the Trump administration and others intent on preventing a more just city from emerging lest it inspire people elsewhere to try the same?

It will be the biggest story we've ever covered. The stakes are enormous. And for us, the sheer number of angles to cover will be staggering. Grassroots movements of tenants, workers, immigrants, climate justice activists and many others will try to seize the moment and win transformative changes that were previously impossible. We're here for it.

With the Left ascendant in the largest and most influential city in the United States, we're looking to do more in 2026 – more coverage in print and online, more editions of the paper, more copies printed and distributed, more podcasts and live events.

And we need your help. Call it THE INDY'S PROJECT 2026.

Our initial goal is to raise $100,000 by the end of 2025 – twice what we've ever asked of our readers in past year-end fund drives. If we can meet our goal, it will give us the runway we need to begin staffing up and bringing this vision into existence. (For more, see Page 20)

Many publications burn through millions of dollars in the hopes of building a viable audience. We didn't have that luxury. We began with a $500 grant from the Puffin Foundation and have been hustling ever since.

Each issue of this paper is a small miracle and a testament to the hard work and dedication reflected in the first-person accounts that appear in this issue (See Page 16). We were never supposed to survive, certainly not this long. Now, in this extraordinary moment for our city and our country, we're ready to take the next leap.

We need fiercely independent media more than ever as billionaire and corporate-owned outlets bend the knee to Trump and the act of promoting "anti-capitalist" ideas is equated by the White House with support for terrorism. If you have given to The Indy *before, we welcome your continued support. If you like what we do but haven't given before, this is the perfect time to do so. When you do, you are not only helping grow this newspaper and our other related projects, but you are helping build a community that encompasses writers, editors, artists, the organizations and movements we cover and the tens of thousands of readers who turn to* The Indy *for a perspective you won't find anywhere else.*

John Tarleton
INDYPENDENT CO-FOUNDER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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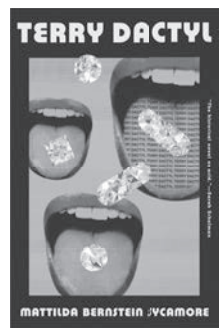
2026



Amy Goodman Juan González Nermeen Shaikh

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CALENDAR 25

JONATHAN SLAFF

OCT / NOV

ONGOING • FREE
USE YOUR EBT AT GROWNYC FARMERS MARKET
Now that it's fall, farm stands at the many local farmers markets around the city will have new produce to offer! You can use your food stamps at the market. Find the market information tent (each GROWNYC market has one) and ask for help getting market tokens with your SNAP card.
Find a nearby market at grownyc.org/greenmarket/ourmarkets or call (212) 788-7900.

SAT • 10AM–12PM • FREE
FREE WEEKLY FARM STANDS
First come, first served fresh farm grown produce for the community.
HARLEM GROWN (134TH ST. FARM)
116 West 134th St
MNHTN

THRU SAT DEC 13 • 6:00–9:00PM • FREE
DRIVING IN PALESTINE • REHAB NAZZAL
Curated by Stefan St-Laurent, this exhibition presents a decade of photographs, videos, and audio recorded by artist and scholar Rehab Nazzal across Palestine under military occupation. At great personal risk, Nazzal created an invaluable archive and urgent artistic testimony of life under siege.
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM
320 West 37th Street
MNHTN

OPENS FRI OCT 10 • $17
ISRAEL PALESTINE ON SWEDISH TV FROM 1958-1989
Excavating long-unseen footage from the vaults of the Swedish public TV network (SVT), archival wizard Göran Hugo Olsson (THE BLACK POWER MIXTAPE 1967–1975) probes 30 years of history in Israel and Palestine and offers a dispassionate glance at everyday life in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
FILM FORUM
213 W. Houston St.
MHNTN

SAT OCT 11 • 11:00AM–4:00PM • FREE
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY CELEBRATION WITH NAIC-NY
Celebrate Indigenous cultures with a day of fun and community on the Bronx River. Enjoy canoeing and kayaking, an Indigenous art workshop and exhibit, a mini-library of Indigenous books, and a Haudenosaunee Social with Northeastern dances (2–3 PM).
RIVER WALK AT BRONX RIVER PARKING B
Near Boston Rd & Bronx River Parkway entrance of the Bronx Zoo
BX

WED OCT 15 • 6:30–8:00PM • FREE
CBH TALK | JELANI COBB & SALAMISHAH TILLET DISCUSS THREE OR MORE IS A RIOT
Pulitzer Prize finalist and New Yorker staff writer Jelani Cobb joins Pulitzer Prize winner Salamishah Tillet for a wide-ranging conversation on Cobb's new book, Three or More Is a Riot: Notes on How We Got Here, 2012–2025. Together they reflect on the movements, backlashes, and cultural touchstones that have defined the last decade–and what might come next.
CENTER FOR BROOKLYN HISTORY
128 Pierrepont Street
BKYN

WED OCT 15 • 7:00PM • $15 ($7 REDUCED)
LEILA & THE WOLVES BY HEINY SROUR
A newly restored screening of Heiny Srour's bold 1984 narrative feature, Leila and the Wolves (90 min, Arabic with English subtitles). Blending reenactment, folklore, and archival footage, the film honors the overlooked role of Arab women in the liberation struggle. Screening followed by a Q&A with the director.
MAYSLES DOCUMENTARY CENTER
343 Malcolm X Blvd
MNHTN

SUN OCT 19 • 5:00–8:00PM • FREE
FILM SCREENING – OCCUPY WALL STREET: AN AMERICAN DREAM
Dir. Michelle Fawcett, 2025, 51 min. A personal narrative with footage from 42 occupations across 27 states, this new documentary captures the people and struggles that fueled the Occupy movement–and the new American Dream they forged. Screening followed by a discussion with the filmmaker.
STARR BAR
214 Starr St.
BKYN

SAT OCT 25 & SUN OCT 26 • 11:00AM–4:00PM • $24
HALLOWEEN ON THE FARM
Celebrate spooky season at Queens County Farm Museum with monster mash dancing, trick-or-treating, hayrides, a 3-acre corn maze, pumpkin patch, and festive fall treats. Plus pumpkin painting, face painting, craft vendors, and more family fun.
QUEENS COUNTY FARM MUSEUM
73-50 Little Neck Parkway, Floral Park
QNS

TUE OCT 28 • 7:00–8:00PM • FREE
RAY D. MADOFF WITH GARY GULMAN: THE SECOND ESTATE
Law scholar Ray D. Madoff joins comedian Gary Gulman for a conversation on how the U.S. tax code privileges the wealthiest Americans, shaping a "sovereign state of wealth" at the expense of working people. In-person and livestream tickets available.
CELESTE AUDITORIUM, NYPL STEPHEN A. SCHWARZMAN BUILDING
476 5th Avenue at 42nd Street
MNHTN

THU OCT 30 • 2:00PM • FREE
LIVE FROM HARLEM – JFA PRESENTS: GENE BERTONCINI AND FRIENDS
Legendary guitarists Gene Bertoncini and Roni Ben-Hur return with longtime collaborators bassist Josh Marcum and vocalist Melissa Stylianou to celebrate Bertoncini's remarkable seven-decade career. The concert will also stream live on the Jazz Foundation and Jazz Museum Facebook pages, and the Museum YouTube Channel.
NATIONAL JAZZ MUSEUM IN HARLEM
58 West 129th Street
MNHTN

FRI OCT 31 • 3:30PM–12:00AM • $20
VILLAGE HALLOWEEN COSTUME BALL
Costume parade and live band, miracles and monsters, Hot food and hot entertainment. Come see and be seen! Outside on E. 10th St. between 1st and 2nd Ave. from 3:30-7:00PM and inside the Theater for the New City from 7:00 PM to Midnight.
THEATRE FOR THE NEW CITY
155 1st Ave.
MNHTN

SUN NOV 6 • 7:00PM • FREE
RAMZI ABUREDWAN & DAL'OUNA ENSEMBLE FEAT. MONEIM ADWAN
Experience the rich soundscape of the Levant as Dal'Ouna blends Palestinian and Arab heritage with contemporary and jazzy accents. Their repertoire spans Egypt to Andalusia, classical to folkloric, carried by bouzouk, oud, cello, percussion, and soulful vocals.
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM
320 West 37th Street
MNHTN

HALLOWEEN: *Revelers will gather once again on October 31 for the annual Village Halloween Ball at the Theater for the New City on 155 1st Avenue.*

HARVEST SEASON: *Make sure and find time this fall to visit one of the numerous apple orchards outside New York City.*

JOHN TARLETON

NYC BRIEFS

BY INDYPENDENT STAFF

BLUESTOCKINGS: *1999–2025*

WIN ROZARIO COPS FACE INTERNAL NYPD CHARGES

NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch will pursue departmental disciplinary charges against the two officers involved in the March 2024 fatal shooting of 19-year-old Win Rozario. The move comes after the Civilian Complaint Review Board's Sept. 8 vote that allegations of excessive force and abuse of authority against Officers Salvatore Alongi and Matthew Cianfrocco had been substantiated. Alongi and Cianfrocco, responding to Rozario calling 911 to say he was having a mental-health crisis, tased him twice and shot him five times within two minutes after they arrived at his family's home in Ozone Park, Queens. According to body-camera footage, Rozario had taken a pair of scissors out of a kitchen drawer, and his mother was trying to restrain him. Police Benevolent Association President Patrick Hendry accused the CCRB of overruling its investigators' findings "because they didn't fit a predetermined outcome." If Tisch had not filed charges by Sept. 26, the only option would have been to file criminal charges against the officers.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC DEFENDERS ALLEGE BOSS TRIED TO START COMPANY UNION

The head of Brooklyn Defender Services tried to get a staff member to join a scheme to replace the workers' current union with a company union, the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys-UAW Local 2325 charged in a complaint filed with the National Labor Relations Board on Sept. 19. It alleges that executive director Lisa Schreibersdorf called the staffer into her office on Sept. 16 and offered to slash her workload if she aided a campaign to decertify Local 2325. The staffer said that Schreibersdorf admitted she knew that was illegal. Brooklyn Defender Services responded with a nondenial: "If the employees decide to change the current Union structure lawfully, as is their right and some have indicated they desire, BDS would follow the law and honor those wishes as well." The union had about 500 members at BDS, which provides criminal defense and other legal services to low-income people in Brooklyn and Queens.

BLUESTOCKINGS CLOSES AFTER 26 YEARS

The Bluestockings radical bookstore and event space announced its closing Sept. 22, after operating on the Lower East Side since 1999. "daily operations are unfortunately no longer sustainable on multiple fronts," it said in a statement. Bluestockings, which began as a feminist bookstore and evolved into a queer and trans worker-owned co-op, had been struggling for several years. It had had to move to a smaller space on Suffolk Street in 2021, it was behind on its $12,000-a-month rent, and at one point this year owed $100,000 to book distributors. It also faced harassment from neighbors for its aiding homeless people, including providing the anti-overdose medication Narcan. And with the collective down to six people, two listed as owners and thus on the hook for debts, and four sometimes-paid workers who did all the day-to-day tasks, it was also riven by internal acrimony. Two of the workers called the closing "white violence" in a social media post, while one of the owners told *Hell Gate* that those two had failed to mail hundreds of books people had ordered. "Bluestockings will be missed," James Folta wrote on *Lit Hub*.

PRAISE FOR *RUN ZOHRAN RUN!*

"SHADES OF BRESLIN AND HAMILL"
—GREG GRANDIN

"FANTASTIC"
—ZEPHYR TEACHOUT

"POPPIN'"
—MOUSTAFA BAYOUMI

"AN ENERGIZING JOLT OF HOPE"
—ASTRA TAYLOR

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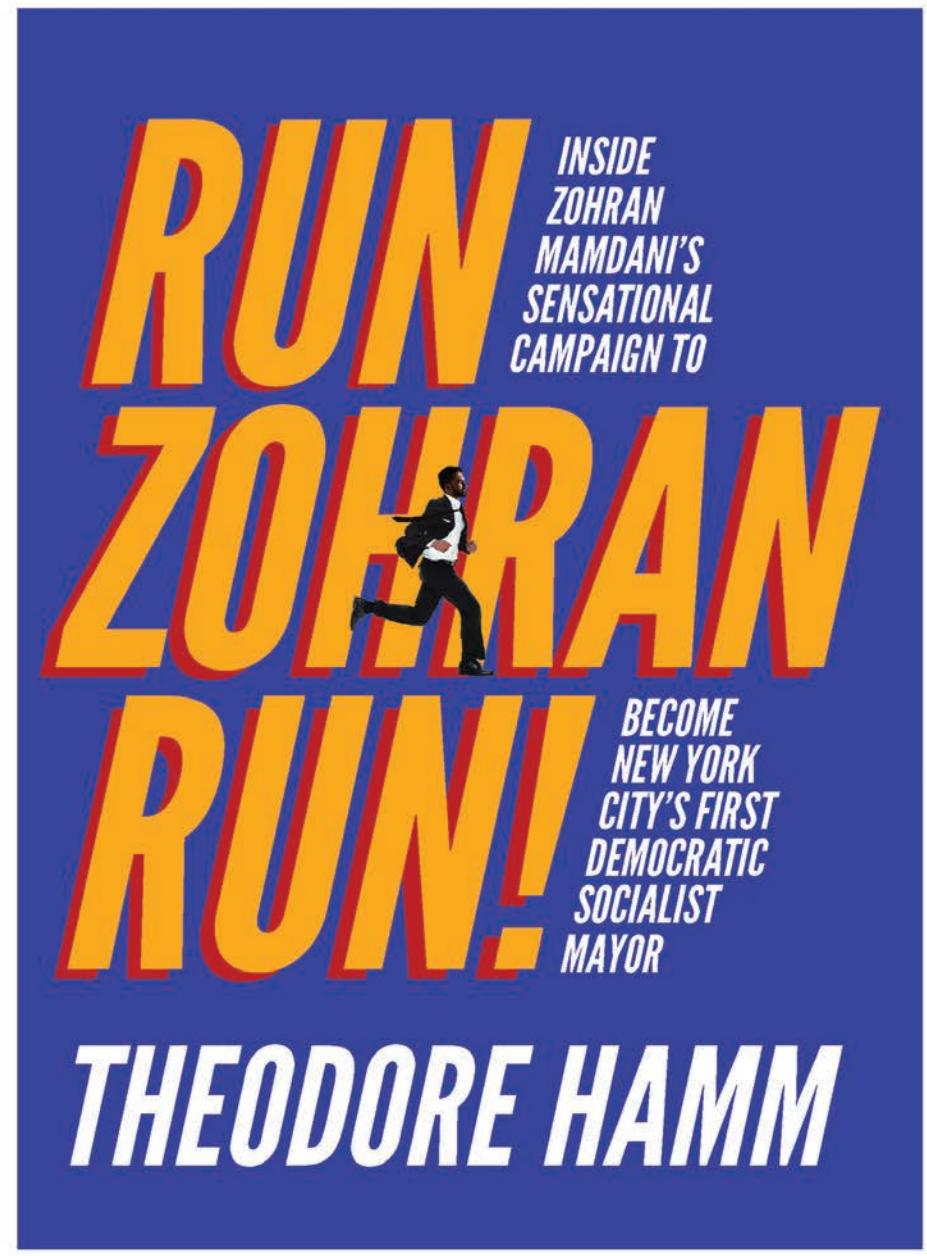
RUN ZOHRAN RUN!
INSIDE ZOHRAN MAMDANI'S SENSATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BECOME NEW YORK CITY'S FIRST DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST MAYOR
THEODORE HAMM

DEACTIVATE THIS

ELSIE CARSON-HOLT

WORKER RIGHTS: *Deliveristas rally against arbitrary deactivations on Sept. 12 at City Hall.*

By Elsie Carson-Holt & Eva Moschitto

Jose Luis Diaz Neri has been a deliverista — one of the overwhelmingly immigrant workers who deliver food for apps like DoorDash, Grubhub and UberEats — since 2009. "I worked all through the pandemic, serving New Yorkers, working long hours despite the risks, and even getting into accidents while navigating the dangerous streets of this city," says Neri, who has lived in New York City for the past 20 years. "During that time, I saw how deliveries got harder. The distances kept getting longer — sometimes nine miles for just one delivery."

But Neri's app was recently "deactivated" by UberEats, meaning his account was deleted with no warning. That's a problem that many of the city's 65,000 deliveristas say they face. Intro 1332, a bill sponsored by City Councilmember Justin Brannan (D-Bay Ridge), would prohibit the app companies from firing or deactivating them without just cause. It comes on the heels of the Council on Sept. 10 overriding Mayor Eric Adams' veto of two bills setting a minimum wage for food-delivery workers.

"What's happening with this mayoral administration is exceptional," said Sergio Achje, a deliverista of 20 years and founding organizer of the Los Deliveristas Unidos union. "One day they're supporting [delivery workers], the next they're stabbing you in the back." The Adams administration, he added, "has a lot of instability, and unfortunately, it's affecting us as deliveristas."

In April, the Police Department announced that traffic violations (like running stop signs or red lights) would be upgraded from tickets to summonses leading to a 4000 percent surge in summonses. The change applied to bikes and e-bikes, but not to cars.

The department also launched a new "Quality of Life Division," which deploys officers to field what have been typically considered 311 complaints (including, ironically, illegal parking). That expanded across Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and the Bronx early August.

"The fear that this new law generates is frustrating for so many people," Achje told *The Indypendent*. "[Immigrants] say 'I'm going to court, and I don't know what's going to happen to me.'"

According to police commissioner Jessica Tisch, the law aims to increase public safety by curbing "out-of-control e-bikes and scooters."

Yet since April, the mayor has ripped up the Bedford Avenue bike lane in Brooklyn, and abandoned other street safety redesigns. On Aug. 21, his chief adviser, Ingrid Lewis-Martin, was indicted for taking bribes to block a bike lane on McGuinness Boulevard. The indictment called it a "crucial life-saving project."

Who is supposed to be getting safer here? Car and truck drivers were responsible for 99.96 percent of reported pedestrian injuries in the first quarter of 2025, according to Streetsblog. Meanwhile, cyclist fatalities continue to increase, according to the Transportation Alternatives nonprofit, and 85 percent of them occur on streets without bike lanes.

A 2024 report by the Workers Justice Project, the organization behind Los Deliveristas Unidos, showed how food delivery has outpaced construction as the most dangerous occupation in New York City.

Many injured delivery workers often go weeks or months without pay, because they don't have access to health insurance or paid sick or injury leave. Deliveristas also lack access to bathrooms and e-bike charging stations while on the job.

MEET THE NEW BOSS

One of the biggest factors endangering deliveristas is that their work is ruled by algorithms that force them to rush. They are under pressure, the Workers Justice Project report said, "to accept those assignments requiring excessive effort or undue risk to avoid being deactivated."

The algorithms reward workers who speed or accept many deliveries, an obvious incentive to ride recklessly. Workers also fear that if they are delayed in dropping off or picking up an order, they may be fired suddenly. If they don't appear to be working quickly enough, the apps threaten to deactivate their accounts.

"Apps are using deactivation and blackouts as a form of retaliation, a form of penalizing workers for being unable to meet their unrealistic timeframes or not accepting every order," said Ligia Guallpa, executive director of the Workers Justice Project and cofounder of its Los Deliveristas Unidos organizing campaign. The apps "are forcing workers to choose between prioritizing their safety or risk losing their jobs."

In response to a 2023 law increasing the minimum wage for deliveristas, companies began hiding tipping options and threatening workers with deactivation.

Intro 1332 would prevent this. It would prohibit delivery companies from deactivating a worker's account (after a probation period of 30 days) without "just cause" or a "bona fide economic reason." Companies would only be able to fire or lock out workers if they informed them of the reason why, and they would have to give some kind of disciplinary warning prior to deactivation.

That would guarantee due process for deliveristas such as Emily Vargas, whose account was suddenly deactivated in August, and make it easier for them to get their jobs back if their firing was proven unjust.

Vargas, speaking through a translator, said that she had spent 10 months as a deliverista, working eight hours a day. "It's my only source of income. It was very difficult, because I came here without work. It was very hard to find work. I got rejected a lot from employment opportunities."

With her account deactivated, she has no steady income to provide for her baby, she added. Still, Vargas said that attending a Sept. 16 deliverista rally at City Hall was "my first time doing anything like this, and it made me feel so much unity."

"Labor exploitation and the constant threat of deactivation force delivery workers to accept dangerous conditions to satisfy platform demands for speed and profit. We cannot continue to allow workers' lives and the safety of our streets to be sacrificed in the name of corporate greed," Guallpa said in a statement. "By protecting workers from exploitative app companies, Intro 1332 will also make our streets safer because when workers can prioritize their own safety without the fear of deactivation, they can create safer streets for everyone."

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October 15

MICHAEL ZWEIG IN CONVERSATION WITH AMY GOODMAN

WORKING CLASS POLITICS IN THE CURRENT MOMENT

When: Wednesday, October 15, 6:30 PM

Where: Brooklyn Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), 110 Schermerhorn St, Brooklyn, NY 11201 (2nd floor)

RSVP REQUIRED

bit.ly/mikezweig

November 12

KAREN MALPEDE IN CONVERSATION WITH RITA CHARON

LAST RADIANCE: RADICAL LIVES, BRIGHT DEATHS

When: Wednesday, November 12, 6:30 PM

Where: Brooklyn Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), 110 Schermerhorn St, Brooklyn, NY 11201 (2nd floor)

RSVP REQUIRED

bit.ly/lastradiancetalk

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THE CULT OF CHARLIE KIRK

CONSERVATIVE ACTIVIST: *Charlie Kirk was assassinated on Sept. 10 in Orem, Utah.*

By Nicholas Powers

Bring boots. The bullshit is getting thick. I mean ankle deep, bullshit. The aftermath of the Charlie Kirk assassination piles up in the media. Turn this way. Israel killed him. Turn that way. It was the Right! No, the Left! The lies get so thick it's hard to know what to think.

Honestly, it does not matter that it was Charlie Kirk. Trump and the MAGA Right were desperate for a reason to crack down on liberals and the Left. Sure Trump knew Kirk. He wants revenge. More important than Trump's hit list is the right-wing policy list that drove them to make Kirk into a martyr. In evangelical churches, A.I. generated videos show Kirk being carried by Jesus, or hanging with Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr.

The Right wants an authoritarian takeover of America. The sanctification of Kirk helps them by giving them a cover to crush anyone who opposes them. Which leads to the real danger. Trump slashed agencies and programs like USAID and Medicaid which will lead to the death of innocent people, here in the United States and around the world. Multiple studies show this. Many of these totally unneeded deaths will be Trump supporters, too.

THE CULT OF CHARLIE KIRK

For $39.95, you can buy an "I Am Charlie Kirk" shirt. The Charlie Kirk Show has them. So does Turning Point USA. The man is being sold as a saint. He wasn't. He was a multi-millionaire, right-wing demagogue. As a conservative teen, he was bankrolled by businessman Bill Montgomery who financed Kirk's Turning Points USA. He became well known in MAGA world for going to colleges and debating, often, young, awkward liberal college students.

Let's start with a simple truth. Charlie Kirk should not have been killed. In a democracy, no one should be killed for speech. In a scene from *Manufacturing Consent*, Noam Chomsky told a student, "If you're in favor of freedom of speech you're in favor for precisely views you despise, otherwise you're not in favor of free speech." Later he made clear that it was not about defending offensive views but the right to express them. Following his lead, it means defending Kirk's speech and those who made funny memes of his death. Free speech is free for everyone.

Let's run with another simple truth. Despising someone's views doesn't take away from their humanity. I hate the racist shit he said. I loathe the religious sexism he aired. Regardless, I still see Kirk as a human being. I can imagine him misplacing his shoe in the morning and being late. I'm sure he loved when his kids slept on his chest.

Personally, I wish his kids still had their father. Yet Kirk would slam that sentiment. He despised empathy for his opponents, "Empathy," he said, "Is a made up New Age term that does a lot of damage." When George Floyd was killed by Officer Chauvin, Kirk called Floyd a "scumbag." He described MLK Jr. as "awful," said the Civil Rights Act was a "mistake."

After reading Kirk's words and watching his show, then comparing him to the image in MAGA media, one fact is clear. Charlie Kirk died twice. Physically, when Tyler Robinson shot him with a hunting rifle. The second, when he was whitewashed for right-wing sainthood, which erased the truth of his life. He is now a conservative martyr, because the Right needs innocent victims. That's what drives the Right. Victimhood. Without it their whole political project would collapse.

VICTIMS R US

Seconds before Kirk was shot at Utah Valley University, he was asked, "Do you know how many transgender Americans have been mass shooters over the last 10 years?"

He picked up the microphone. "Too many."

Kirk's cruel rhetoric, delivered in a nasal, smart-aleck tone was a megaphone for conservatism. Put simply, right-wing ideology creates a mass hallucination in the minds of millions of people. It is a story of us versus them.

"We stand for what is good, what is virtuous, what is noble," top Trump aide Stephen Miller declared at Kirk's quasi-state funeral. "And for those trying to incite violence against us … What do you have? You have nothing. You are nothing. You are wickedness, you are jealousy!"

The Right believes if it does not take the nation back now, they'll lose it forever. If one lives and breathes this story, sees it on your social media feed, in podcasts and rallies, it creates a ravenous hunger for real-life evidence. The Black man who recently stabbed a Ukrainian woman to death in Charlotte, North Carolina. Evidence. Late night comedians joking about MAGA. Evidence. Transgender visibility and athletes. Evidence. Gay marriage is legal. Evidence. Charlie Kirk is assassinated. Evidence.

The Right needs to see itself as a victim because the evidence

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WHAT IS ANTIFA?

GARY MARTIN

By Renée Feltz

When a mix of 300 ICE, FBI and Border Patrol agents in combat gear descended from a Black Hawk helicopter and burst out of box trucks to conduct a middle-of-the-night raid at a Chicago apartment complex on Sept. 30th, their stated mission was to find members of Tren de Aragua, just like those the U.S. military claimed were onboard boats they blew up in the Caribbean.

The same day of the Chicago raid, President Trump instructed some 800 U.S. generals summoned to Marine Base Quantico to use cities "run by the radical left Democrats…as training grounds for our military" for what he called a "war from within."

"San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, they're very unsafe places. And we're going to straighten them out," Trump vowed.

At some point on that same busy day, the White House issued a press release that added another city to the list.

"The Radical Left's reign of terror in Portland ends now, with President Donald J. Trump mobilizing federal resources to stop Antifa-led hellfire in its tracks," it announced, bemoaning the "premeditated anarchy that has scarred the city for years, leaving officers battered, citizens terrorized, and property defaced."

Trump first deployed federal troops to Portland in 2020 after some people at protests demanding justice for the police killing of George Floyd hurled molotov cocktails and other objects. In a now infamous address to the National Association of Police Organizations, Trump blasted demonstrators in "Portland and other cities" who "have cans of soup. Soup. And they throw the cans of soup… And then, when they get caught, they say, 'No, this is soup for my family.'"

Now, Trump is expediting his war on "Antifa," under which he lumps together liberals, leftists, radicals and socialists and anyone else he dislikes. While the actual American anti-fascist movement is currently decentralized, leaderless and small, he targeted Antifa in two sweeping measures in the days before the Chicago raid that suggest it could indeed be a training exercise.

First he signed an Executive Order designating Antifa as a "domestic terrorist organization" and outlined a "new law enforcement strategy that investigates… the organized structures, networks, entities, organizations, funding sources, and predicate actions behind them."

Then in a much broader national security presidential memorandum, known as NSPM-7, Trump instructed the FBI's 200 Joint Terrorism Task Forces to "disrupt networks, entities, and organizations that foment political violence" — including conduct that expresses "anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity" - and to do so even "before they result in violent political acts."

They are targeting "pre-crime," wrote journalist Ken Klippenstein, who has called NSPM-7 a "sweeping policy decree for the defense, foreign policy, intelligence, and law enforcement apparatus" that is "the most important change in the expansion of government power since the PATRIOT Act."

Like the unlawful domestic intercepts that the PATRIOT Act secretly authorized, critics say these new attacks on dissent and the right to freedom of speech and association pose more of a threat to the stability of the country than the Antifa menace Trump tries to conjure up — which is a far cry from its glory days.

WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE

In 1933, future New York mayor Fiorello La Guardia drew 100,000 people to Washington Square Park for an anti-fascist protest against the rise of authoritarianism in Europe. In 1935, some 200 left-wing and liberal faculty at CUNY's City College founded the Anti-Fascist Association and wrote in their inaugural bulletin:

"We recognize that Fascism can result only in the degradation of art, science and culture; intense nationalism; racial discrimination; enforced labor; the suppression of civil rights, including academic freedom; militarization; lowering the standard of living; and denial of equality to women."

An exhibit called "Facing Fascism" at the Museum of the City of New York documented how, between 1936-1939, New Yorkers made up the bulk of some 1,000 Americans who "died fighting to protect the elected government of the Spanish Republic against a rebellion led by General Francisco Franco and backed by Hitler and Mussolini."

As Americans debated how to respond to the rise of fascism, actual fascists valued the discord. "Nothing will be easier than to produce a bloody revolution in the U.S.," wrote Hitler's Propaganda Minister, Joseph Goebbels, in 1933. "No other country has so many social and racial tensions. We shall be able to play on many strings there."

The American anti-fascist movement was largely dormant until it grew in response to Trump's election in 2016 and return to power in 2025, and has been part of protests against ICE arrests, prompting New York Mayor Eric Adams to blast "members of Antifa that have made their way into the city."

As politically-motivated violence surges, Trump and his echo chamber have tried to pin the blame on an organized conspiracy by the left. In a recent column supporting NSPM-7, Douglas Murray in the *New York Post* claimed the bullets used by Charlie Kirk's assassin were "literally carved with Antifa slogans."

When members of the American anti-fascist movement became the target of McCarthyism in the 1950's, the Communist Party USA released an open letter "to all our fellow Americans, irrespective of political faith" that warned: "The bell tolls not just for the Communists alone, but for the hard-won rights of all Americans. All must act together to save American constitutional liberties."

As *The Indypendent* went to press, more than 3,700 non-profit groups published an open letter condemning NSPM-7 and Trump's "efforts to defund, discredit, and dismantle nonprofit groups he disagrees with" as "reprehensible and dangerous—a violation of a fundamental freedom in America."

Renée Feltz is News Director at Democracy Now!

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CHAE KIHN

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ZIONISM IS THE STRUGGLE TO SAVE LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

By Cole Sandick

I am a secular Jew who was very much raised in a Zionist milieu. For most of my life the concept of Israel being anything but a positive good felt inconceivable. Forget supporting Palestine, I didn't even know there was a Palestine until I was 12 years old and saw horrifying images on my television screen of Gaza being bombed in July 2014. Before that, I only understood the conflict to be between Israel and "Israel's enemies," those enemies simply being other Arab states.

In the spring of 2018 when I was 16 years old, a glimmer of skepticism about Zionism — the nationalist ideology and movement to colonize all of historic Palestine and impose a Jewish ethnostate on its people — entered my consciousness.

Riverdale Country School in the Bronx, an institution I had recently stopped attending, but where I still knew many people, was at war with itself over the fate of one of its longest-serving and most revered teachers, Joel Doerfler. He was a lefty dissident at a suffocatingly bourgeois school. He was also a Jewish anti-Zionist. The dispute at the school revolved around a seminar he taught on Israel-Palestine. The class was an ongoing conversation. It had no official viewpoint, was open for all to attend, and welcomed lively debates between Doerfler and students with a wide range of views on the subject.

This situation had become unacceptable to Riverdale's numerous wealthy Jewish-Zionist parents with ties to the Israel lobby, including the American Jewish Committee and its future leader, then-Congressman Ted Deutsch. The critics of Doerfler and another pro-Palestine teacher, Shawn Redden, claimed the two had created "an atmosphere of tolerance for hate." Students were said to have been "intimidated," the teaching was described as "leftist indoctrination," and Doerfler and Redden were compared to the likes of "a tumor," "white supremacists," and in a wonderfully audacious example of reactionary identity politics, "Me Too predators."

Needless to say, Doerfler and Redden, despite considerable support from students and alumni, never stood a chance. The campus was forcibly silenced, its academic and intellectual rigor was diminished, careers were blown up, civil liberties were torn to shreds, all to protect the sensitivities of a wealthy and powerful ideological clique devoted to the unrelenting support of a foreign country.

Does any of this sound familiar?

It took me another five years and the beginning of the genocide in Gaza to translate my growing discomfort with the authoritarian role Zionism plays in society into a genuinely anti-Zionist worldview. But when I got there, it was in many ways the accumulation of a series of backlashes against not only the things Zionism was doing to Palestinians, but the things Zionism was doing to our democracy.

The days, months and now years since October 7 have left a trail of destruction. Unimaginable cruelty and dehumanization has been imposed on Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, an entire people surgically obliterated, terrorized and traumatized for generations. The liberal world order has gone from an idealistic vision fraught with constant hypocrisies to a hollow corpse, a mockery of a generation of elder statesmen who out of short-term political cynicism have allowed their own vision to be blown to smithereens by a single ethnostate. And with all of this has come an unending wave of sociopolitical vitriol and protest that has swept the entire world.

Our institutions have been tested and they have failed us. And not only in their inability to stop or even thoroughly scrutinize the sort of extraordinary crime against humanity the West claims to define itself against, but in their willingness to shed freedom of expression and liberal democracy in order to do it. Critics of Israel's genocide have been systemically targeted and purged from institutions ranging from academia to journalism to Hollywood to all manner of social media, where, in just one relatively mundane example, Human Rights Watch found north of 1,000 instances of pro-Palestine content being taken down by Meta just in the first month after October 7. Also in that fateful month MSNBC fired three Muslim anchors for failing to fall into line. More recently, British and Irish musical acts Bob Vylan and Kneecap have faced blacklisting and terrorism charges for their ardent support for the Palestinian cause. These are merely four of an impossibly vast swath of examples that I could easily recall.

THE ISRAEL LOBBY AT WORK

This annihilation of open society starts with the Israel lobby exploiting the flaws of our democratic processes and the follies of our political polarization. Powerful special interest groups that dilute democracy for their own specific priorities are a familiar feature of U.S. democracy, especially since the 2010 *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision, which opened the floodgates for wealthy campaign donors. There are essentially no restrictions on campaign finance in U.S. elections, and exceedingly wealthy individuals and groups can and do spend millions, tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars funding political candidates and parties who are then inevitably indebted to elite capital and forced to do their bidding or risk being spent out of power themselves.

The Israel lobby, more than any other entity, has masterfully seized on this opportunity and established itself as the fiercest and most extravagant of plutocratic agents. It's absolutely not antisemetic paranoia to point this out. The Israel lobby quite literally just spends more money on our politicians than any other special interest group. In 2024, during just one election cycle, AIPAC — the biggest of several big Zionist machines — spent $127 million on candidates for federal office. Donald Trump has taken $230 million from Zionist groups since 2020. They are unparalleled in their ubiquitousness. Virtually every federal politician takes money from them, and your average member of Congress received more than $100,000 in AIPAC contributions last year alone. Thus, most politicians, many of whom don't even have strong feelings about Israel or Palestine to begin with, simply fall in line as a means of securing their political survival.

And even this fails to capture just how intimately the Israel lobby is involved with the machinations of our governance. Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Kentucky), has claimed that every Republican member of Congress funded by AIPAC has an "AIPAC babysitter" who visits them frequently and gives them scripted talking points to use whenever Israel is under scrutiny and needs to be defended. This is a bipartisan state of affairs.

NO TO GENOCIDE: *Thousands of protesters marched on the United Nations on Sept. 26 to protest the appearance of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.*

Not only do Zionist politicians have a tendency to repeat the same phrases over and over again ("right to exist," "right to defend itself," etc.,) but AIPAC-backed politicians have an odd tendency to make extremely similar public statements in unison at almost the exact same time. When Ireland imposed a BDS-style boycott on goods from Israeli settlements last July, 13 different AIPAC-funded members of Congress sent out eerily similar tweets condemning this highly random, specific thing that had nothing to do with America. Eleven more followed their lead the next day. This is policymaking on a vitally important global issue literally being outsourced to an ideological special interest group.

Meanwhile, for the rest of the elite capitalist class, Zionism has become a fabulously convenient weapon to beat back and delegitimize a burgeoning U.S. left to suit their material interests. When AIPAC torpedoes a left-wing candidate, they damage the cause of anti-Zionism, but they simultaneously damage the causes of everything from universal healthcare to taxing the rich to organized labor to the fight against climate change. The Israel lobby, despite its maniacal and singular devotion to its titular cause, has essentially grown into something of a centralized bastion of plutocratic reaction, a catch-all of anti-left politics laundered through the language of liberal identity politics with a seemingly innocuous claim of seeking to oppose antisemitism. In one small, hilarious example, the Italian American Civil Rights League held a silly protest at Zohran Mamdani's office in Astoria, Queens, over his opposition to Christopher Columbus statues. The marketing for this event, which has absolutely nothing to do with Israel, was coated with Israeli flags. Welcome to the anti-left omnicause.

This reactionary unity is even more glaring in the now tightly entrenched alliance between Israel and the Western far-right. The Israeli state and the Trump administration are closely aligned on everything from the ethnic cleansing of Gaza to the rapidly accelerating annexation of the West Bank. Trump promotes himself as Israel's "protector." His chosen ambassador to the country is former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, a Christian Zionist who once proclaimed "there's really no such thing as a Palestinian."

Israel in turn loves Trump. He currently commands a 69% approval rating in Israel, far higher than in virtually any other country. This bond between Israel and Western fascism also extends well beyond Israel's borders. Last March Israel held a farcical conference centered on "opposing antisemitism" that included ultranationalist political leaders from

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RESISTING ZIONISM

Continued from previous page

Hungary, Spain, Argentina, Sweden, Brazil, Serbia, the Netherlands, and France. Jordan Bardella, the leader of France's National Rally, a party founded by a Holocaust denier, gave a speech blaming antisemitism on Muslim immigration.

While the Zionists loudly insist that left-wing antisemitism is real and incredibly dangerous, they largely ignore right-wing antisemitism, which poses a far greater danger. American and especially European fascists hate Jews, as has always been the case. Yet, when far-right activist Charlie Kirk was assassinated on September 10, virtually every member of Israel's cabinet publicly mourned him, seemingly failing to remember Kirk's statements like "Jewish communities have been pushing the exact kind of hatred against whites that they claim to want people to stop using against them" and "The philosophical foundation of anti-whiteness has been largely financed by Jewish donors in the country." The Anti-Defamation League, which equates any protest against Israel's actions with antisemitism, showed support for Elon Musk after he did an actual Nazi salute on stage at Trump's inauguration.

It's fundamental to understand that while this unholy alliance between Zionists and fascist antisemites is in many ways born out of pragmatism — the far-right will give Israel its undying support in spite of the antisemitism — it also stems from sincere ideological common ground. They both seek to exterminate Arabs and Muslims. They both want to destroy the organized left. And they both share an inclination toward nationalism, militarism and authoritarianism. As always, the tapestry of progressive causes we seek to champion and the citadel of reactionary causes we seek to oppose are all irrevocably intertwined.

ISRAEL IS THE GLOBAL FAR-RIGHT. IT'S THEIR ASPIRATIONS, THEIR BELIEFS, THEIR VISION FOR STATECRAFT IMPLEMENTED ON A GRAND SCALE AND PUT INTO MOTION.

ZIONISM & LIBERAL IDENTITY POLITICS

Zionist social repression begins with a foundation of liberal identity politics. While many on the left recoil at criticizing identity politics, rejecting identity politics is more vital than ever, owing to it now being used as a blunt force object for fascism, genocide, and state coercion. All of us reasonable people can agree antisemitism is a very bad thing, that it should be explicitly combated in some way, and that Jews should be safe and free from bigotry and harassment. Zionists and Zionist groups impose their sweeping authoritarianism on these explicitly liberal terms by attempting to define all anti-Zionism and all support for Palestine as antisemitism and all expressions and demonstrations of those beliefs to be antisemetic harassment.

This ideologically self-interested claim gets repackaged in a number of different ways, from distorting the views or statements of protesters to singling out individuals who don't represent anti-Zionism as a whole to spreading deranged conspiracies about their links to Hamas and other Arab adversaries of Israel. But across the discourse there is a single, vitally important throughline: Jews — and specifically, Zionist Jews — believe anti-Zionism is antisemitic, and feel offended and threatened when they have to interact with said views. They'll say that (Zionist) Jews, and only (Zionist) Jews can be the arbiters for what is and is not antisemitism and that if they say something is antisemitism then we all need to listen to them.

I don't think Zionist Jews are bullshitting us when they genuinely express fear and outrage at the sight of people shouting anti-Zionist slogans and waving Palestinian flags, and I say that as someone who once existed in their ranks. But here's the thing: there are many white people who believe that it's anti-white racism to teach their kids about slavery. There are Christians who believe it's anti-Christian bigotry to teach kids about evolution. There are extremist Muslims who believe it's Islamophobia to condemn Islamic nationalism and theocracy. To assuage all of these sensitivities wouldn't be remotely workable for a society, let alone just.

Yet, here we are witnessing a new McCarthyism carried out in the name of "Jewish safety" everywhere from college campuses to Hollywood to cable news. If pro-Palestine voices are all antisemitic, and antisemitism is worthy of being repressed, then pro-Palestine voices must be repressed. If pro-Palestine voices are all antisemitic and antisemitism makes Jews unsafe, then the existence of pro-Palestine voices makes Jews unsafe. If pro-Palestine voices are all antisemitic and antisemitism is hurtful to Jews, the tolerance of anti-Zionism in any way is an affront to the dignity of Jews everywhere.

This repression has advanced beyond mere cancel culture and institutional censorship. Increasingly, violence, and even state violence, is being encouraged and deployed against anti-Zionists. Just to recount incidents that have taken place only on Columbia's campus, pro-Palestine students have been doxxed, stalked and harassed, often at the hands of a mentally unstable Israeli professor, who only recently left the school of his own volition. Pro-Palestine students have been attacked with chemical weapons by IDF soldiers attending the school, with no consequences for the perpetrators. Peaceful protesters have been savagely beaten, gassed, and even shot at by cops who were called in to "protect Jewish students." And last spring, two students, Mahmoud Khalil and Mohsen Mahdawi, were rounded up by ICE and jailed for expressing support for Palestinian rights and were only released after the intervention of courts and immense public outrage.

The detention of Khalil, as well as that of Tufts student Rümeysa Öztürk who criticized Israel in her campus newspaper, represents Zionist oppression in its final, ultimate form. The instruments of the state — not even the Israeli one, but the American one — are being used to arrest, jail, and terrorize critics of the actions of a foreign country without anything resembling a trial. This is a vision more and more Zionists subscribe to, with prominent Zionist activists outright demanding that all pro-Palestine students be deported. One of Israel's most popular songs last year called for Palestinian pop stars Dua Lipa and Bella Hadid to be murdered. It's gone beyond simply killing all the Palestinians; they yearn for a permanent ideological victory of the most absolute degree — a world where everyone who disagrees with them, Palestinian or otherwise, is dead or imprisoned, stripped of even the dignity of being remembered.

And this process of Zionist totalitarianism, imposed with both autocratic muscle and rhetoric about "safety," is now rapidly being exported across our political landscape. The crisis of internet freedom is very much being supercharged and dominated by the need for Zionist coercion and algorithmic control. Netanyahu recently called TikTok, whose algorithm was recently handed over to a Zionist tech firm, Israel's "most important weapon." Wikipedia, the internet's greatest bastion of free information, is getting pilloried by Zionists for refusing to depict the Israeli state in a wholly favorable light. JD Vance recently used the phrase "blood libel," a centuries-old phrase referring to medieval antisemitism, to describe criticisms levied at ICE by liberals and leftists, protests that his administration is now seeking to criminalize.

Perhaps the most perfect example of Zionist authoritarianism being exported to other areas of discourse, however, is the recent crackdown on speech in the wake of the assassination of Charlie Kirk. One of the most frightening elements of this was how it mirrors Zionist repression in its aims, tactics and rhetoric. Throughout the relentless assault on political speech in the wake of Kirk's murder, the doxxing, the firings, the endless cries for sensitivity and safety, you could hear the echoes of Zionist talking points that have been used to erode our right to political speech for decades, tactics that are now being used to swallow American democracy whole.

THE PALESTINE EXCEPTION

This is why abominations like the one taking place on Columbia's campus should be treated as a national, even global crisis. It's why you should care about it. Even if you, like nearly all Americans, have no personal stake in what's going on in Israel and Palestine, you very much do have a personal stake in the battle against Zionist repression. It's coming to your workspace, your entertainment, your college campus, and maybe your high school campus. And even if it doesn't, the contagion of its anti-democratic vision most certainly will be coming for you. There's a limit to how long the Palestine exception to freedom of expression in America can remain an exception. If you allow for authoritarian state control on one debate, eventually that authoritarianism will spread to any and all debates and all of democracy will be crushed.

Israel's champions in the West argue that support

for the Zionist state helps to expand liberal democracy. "Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East," they'll tell you over and over again. Maybe Israel's restricted, supermajority Jewish electorate enjoys more formal democratic rights than the population in many Arab states, but their autocracy is far more radical and far more dangerous. It's a supremacist, militarized, ultranationalist ethnostate that seeks to systematically eradicate the Palestinian people and replace our vision of a world governed by human rights with a premodern framework of unchecked savagery and might makes right.

Israel is the global far-right. It's their aspirations, their beliefs, their vision for statecraft implemented on a grand scale and put into motion. It's why the Western far-right adores Israel, despite their antisemitism, and it's why Israel adores the Western far-right, despite said antisemitism. And it's an entity that is desperately and rabidly seeking expansion, not only to Syria and Lebanon and Iran, but to the United States of America, through their closeness to our current fascist imperial presidency and its central role in the 21st century's reactionary international.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The struggle against Zionism is the struggle for liberal democracy.

A few major steps to take beyond mere piecemeal actions like recognizing the state of Palestine would be a total withdrawal of all military and financial assistance to Israel, sweeping economic sanctions and the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers to ensure the distribution of humanitarian aid to starving Palestinians. A massive part of the anti-Zionist project, however, must be targeted explicitly at the Israel lobby as an anti-democratic force that is inhibiting Western governments from being able to respond to this situation objectively and freely.

The simplest and most achievable fix to counter the influence of groups like AIPAC is making them and the Zionist cause electorally radioactive to the point where the financial patronage comes with a high political price. A rare bit of good news is that this is already happening. Not only has public opinion swung against Israel to a staggering degree throughout the West, but once relatively anonymous Zionist groups have become well known to more voters and aligning with them is coming with more and more popular blowback. Just recently it was reported that Hakeem Jeffries, the fanatically Zionist Democratic House Leader, would switch from taking money from AIPAC to taking money from J-Street, a less extreme iteration of the former.

Eventually though, we need more substantive long term fixes to the industrial scale corruption that has taken place. U.S. laws regarding campaign finance in particular need to be radically overhauled with reforms like legislation overriding *Citizens United*, embracing small-dollar matching funds, publicly funding elections, closing loopholes for single candidate PACs, and ideally, cementing these changes with a new constitutional amendment.

There's also going to have to be a relentless effort to defend our right to criticize Israel and to defeat measures that erode open society even further. We have to push back on things like the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism, which seeks to legally codify anti-Zionism as antisemitic. We're going to have to fight for the exoneration and freedom of dissidents like former Columbia students Mahmoud Khalil and Mohsen Mahdawi who have been targeted for deportation. The wins will be extremely hard fought, but the anti-Zionist movement's energy is extraordinary and public opinion is continuing to turn in its favor. The Israel lobby still has the power to win one individual battle after another to crush its critics. But it's losing the larger war as public support for Israel craters and more and more people are turned off by the Israel lobby's heavy-handed tactics and begin, like I did seven years ago, to ask questions about Israel and its relationship to the U.S.

Reaching these conclusions has been extremely difficult for me to come to terms with, not only in regards to my personal background and impulse to please my Jewish Zionist friends and family, but in regards to the cataclysmic and momentous implications this reality has on the entire world, as a perpetual crisis that we will have to spend years fighting against, with ever more human suffering piling up behind us. Quite often I find there's a cynical, defensive tendency among centrists and moderates to frame left-wing anti-Zionism as self-serving and performative. I can assure anyone reading this that I did not want to get to this radical sounding point in my life. But a blanket objection to radicalism is every bit as irrational, crippling and confining as an absolutist opposition to moderation. An extraordinary crime at the hands of the Israeli state must engender an extraordinary response by a world that treasures liberty, pluralism and human rights.

15TH STREET FRIENDS
BREAKING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE IN GAZA:
QUAKERS AND ACTIVISTS RESIST GENOCIDE
OCTOBER 19TH
SUNDAY, 1-4 PM
FREE ADMISSION
ACTIVIST SPEAKERS PANEL AND CONCERT
LINDA SARSOUR
SAM HUSSEINI
AHARON DARDIK
SANDER HICKS
PLUS LIVE MUSIC WITH DAVID ROVICS
"A RADICAL RESHAPING OF THE POWER DYNAMICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS NECESSARY TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND HATE."
OCTOBER 19TH
SUNDAY, 1-4 PM
FREE ADMISSION
15 RUTHERFORD PLACE, NYC
A COMPLIMENTARY LIGHT LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT 12:30.

ANOTHER JOURNALISM IS POSSIBLE

FOR 25 YEARS *THE INDYPENDENT* HAS BEEN A BOLD PROGRESSIVE NEWSPAPER AND WEBSITE THAT PROVIDES A FEARLESS VOICE IN THE NYC MEDIA LANDSCAPE. HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

BY INDYPENDENT STAFF

2000 FALL # 2

Inspired by the Nov. 1999 Battle of Seattle and a subsequent wave of anti-corporate protests that rippled around the world, *The Indypendent* launches as a four-page, black-and-white newspaper dedicated to covering radical social movements in NYC and beyond. It is a part of Indymedia, a global network of grassroots media projects that flourished in the early 2000s, hence the "y" in our name.

2001 SEPTEMBER # 11

The Indy publishes a four-page special issue within 48 hours of the 9/11 attacks and another 12-page special issue a week later. As the Bush administration rushes to exploit public rage and fear following 9/11, *The Indy* becomes a magnet for New Yorkers who are alarmed by where the country is headed.

2002 NOVEMBER # 22

A who's who of leading Democrats, including Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden, can't figure it out. But four months before the United States invades Iraq, *The Indy* publishes a special issue titled "Why War? Why Now?" The issue debunks official rationales for war, offers a first-hand glimpse into the lives of ordinary Iraqis and covers the growing antiwar movement. A two-page center spread highlights dozens of sites in the United States where weapons of mass destruction are developed and produced.

2004 SUMMER # 52

While corporate media push unsubstantiated scare stories about protesters and terrorists besieging New York during the upcoming Republican National Convention, *The Indy* trumpets the rights of dissenters and reports on the myriad reasons they are taking to the streets. Two August issues have print runs of 100,000 and 150,000, the largest circulation in decades for a radical, grassroots newspaper.

2004 DECEMBER # 62

John Tarleton profiles Harold Noel, a Brooklyn-born Iraq War vet who finds himself fighting mental illness and sleeping outside at the onset of winter while his family falls apart. Noel's story is subsequently picked up by a number of national outlets. Noel tells *The Indy*, "I walk around crying every day. I feel lost in my own land; the land I fought for. … Sometimes I just feel like picking up a gun and calling it quits. … But, something's got to get better. I didn't just risk my life for nothing. There's a God out there — somewhere." A month later, an anonymous donor puts up $18,500 to cover a year's rent for a three-bedroom apartment in the Bronx for Noel, his wife and three kids.

2005 FEBRUARY # 65

With the Republicans entrenched in the White House for another four long years, *The Indy* declares it's "Moving Beyond Bush and Dick" in its first annual sex issue. Featured articles include a look at the working life of a dominatrix, boot fetishes, BDSM and the use of safewords, a how-to guide for making dildos and a first-person piece on fighting back against the police harassment of queers cruising in Central Park's Ramble area.

2005 SEPTEMBER # 76

The Indy publishes a post-Katrina special issue that looks at the blatant disregard for Black lives in the response of the government and the corporate media as well as the hidden heroics of people coming to each other's aid. "I'm in the Algiers neighborhood of New Orleans, the only part that isn't flooded," writes former New Orleans Black Panther and community organizer Malik Rahim. "The water is good. Our parks and schools could easily hold 40,000 people and they're not using any of it. This is criminal. People are dying for no other reason than the lack of organization."

2007 NOVEMBER # 112

When the House of Representatives approves the Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Act by a vote of 400–6, it seems a sure bet that the measure will sail through the Senate and be signed by President George W. Bush. However, when Jessica Lee's reporting reveals how the legislation could be used by the government to target people engaged in First Amendment-protected activity and traditional forms of nonviolent civil disobedience, a firestorm of criticism ensues from activists and civil libertarians across the political spectrum. The legislation subsequently dies in the Senate. Lee would later win a Project Censored award for writing one of the 10 most important under-reported domestic news stories of that year.

2008 APRIL # 119

Using the story of a dementia-afflicted, 86-year-old homeowner in Crown Heights as a starting point, Joseph Huff-Hannon does a deep dive into the predatory practices of sub-prime mortgage lenders in neighborhoods like Crown Heights and Bed-Stuy. "If the housing market falls precipitously here as it has across much of the nation," Huff-Hannon warns, "a cascade of foreclosures is likely to follow. An alarming number of those losing their homes will likely be black seniors."

2009 MARCH # 133

Sarah Secunda captures the zeitgeist of the Great Recession in her coverage of striking immigrant workers at the Stella D'oro bakery in the Bronx who find themselves locked in a bitter labor battle against a private equity company demanding deep cuts in pay and benefits.

2010 SEPTEMBER # 155

In a special back-to-school issue of *The Indy*, we hear from activist parents, teachers, students and radical education scholars on the pitfalls of corporate school reform, overreliance on standardized testing, the importance of teachers unions and the misuse of "gifted and talented" programs to maintain a system of de facto segregation in New York City's public schools.

2011 FALL # 170-172

The Indy publishes three special issues during Occupy Wall Street and its immediate aftermath. Coverage ranges from photo essays and first-person pieces to analysis of the relationship between Occupy and labor unions, the police and the 99% and why taking over public squares in major global cities is such a powerful tactic.

2012 NOVEMBER # 181

We publish a 20-page, post-Sandy special edition that includes the latest news on relief efforts and how to get involved, a look at the real estate industry's drive to build on the waterfront and a deep-dive (so to speak) piece on the impact of rising ocean levels over the coming centuries.

2013 JANUARY # 183

As Barack Obama begins his second term as president, *The Indy* appoints a Shadow Cabinet of visionary thinkers and doers. Each Shadow Cabinet member writes a short essay about what they would do upon taking office. Shadow Cabinet appointees include Secretary of State Laura Flanders, Attorney General Michael Ratner and Secretary of Energy Bill McKibben, who titles his article "One Thing Before I'm Fired."

2014 DECEMBER # 202

After protests erupt across the nation in response to the non-indictments of police officers who killed Michael Brown and Eric Garner, Nicholas Powers writes in *The Indy*, "We show our hands because we're scared of being killed by officers who have been given license to kill Black people and go unpunished. I'm asking you to take this weight from us. I'm asking you to hold your hands up too."

2015 OCTOBER # 209

Soon after Donald Trump jumps to the front of the Republican primary field, *The Indy* runs a cover story on Trump's career as a crony capitalist. While many pundits at the time assume Trump's buffoonish campaign will soon flame out, the piece's author Peter Rugh warns that the former reality TV star can very well win the White House and if he does, "President Trump" will morph into King Donald I.

2017 JANUARY # 221

Millions of people in hundreds of cities take to the streets in women-led marches on the day after Trump's inauguration. In conjunction with the marches, we publish a 20-page Women's March special edition that amplified the voices and concerns of the most progressive wing of the movement.

2018 JUNE # 236

"Holy SMOKES!" Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez tweets on June 2, 2018. "Our campaign is the FRONT PAGE STORY of NYC's classic monthly."

The Indy's profile of AOC's under-the-media radar run for Congress marks her first appearance on a newspaper or magazine cover. But it won't be the last after the 28-year-old democratic socialist goes on to win a historic primary victory over Queens Democratic Party boss Joe Crowley.

2019 MAY # 246

"Take Down The Landlords" screams the headline of the May 2019 *Indy*, a 24-page affordable housing special edition. A month later, tenants rights advocates did just that, winning sweeping rent law reforms in the NY state legislature that stunned the real estate industry.

2020 AUGUST # 257

When COVID-19 hits New York full force in March, *The Indy* responds by publishing more than 80 original articles on indypendent.org during the first three months of the pandemic. Coverage includes first-person pieces from frontline nurses facing PPE shortages, reports from inside Rikers Island, profiles of a sprawling network of mutual aid groups, a look at the growing Cancel Rent movement and reviews of the best anti-capitalist movies to watch while secluded at home. Our August cover story gives voice to the growing opposition of parents, teachers and support staff to a poorly conceived plan to reopen New York City's public schools.

2022 AUGUST # 273

Weeks after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, *The Indy's* Yastika Guru successfully fakes her own pregnancy to gain access to several NYC "pregnancy crisis centers" run by anti-choice zealots and expose how they manipulate and mislead women who are carrying unwanted pregnancies.

2023 MARCH # 278

The Indy's Amba Guerguerian travels to Atlanta, Georgia and reports from inside a burgeoning protest movement against plans to raze an urban forest to build a massive police training facility known as Cop City. During her time in Atlanta, Guerguerian narrowly avoided being swept up in an indiscriminate police crackdown against protesters that left dozens in jail facing trumped-up domestic terrorism charges.

2024 FALL # 283 & 284

With Israel-Palestine dominating the news in the wake of October 7 and many Americans struggling to understand the sources of the conflict, we publish a three-page historical timeline laying out the 100-year history of Zionist colonization of Palestine and its impact. In our following issue, Lara-Noor Walton takes *Indy* readers into the heart of Little Palestine, a vibrant ethnic enclave in South Brooklyn where the Gaza genocide's impact is already being felt.

2025 JANUARY # 292

Six months before Zohran Mamdani shocks the political world by trouncing Andrew Cuomo to win the NYC Democratic mayoral primary, *The Indy* features the little-known state assemblymember on its cover, noting the potency of his affordability message and the grassroots strength of New York City DSA to rally support for his campaign.

FIRST PERSON

Hundreds of volunteers and staff have contributed to making The Indypendent a unique community institution over the past quarter century. Here are seven of their stories

HOW THE PAPER GOT STARTED

By Ana Nogueira

The Indypendent's very first meetings were held during the spring and summer of 2000. There were eight of us who would meet at each other's houses. We were inspired by the global justice movement, which had erupted in the United States in November 1999 at demonstrations that shut down a summit meeting of the World Trade Organization.

A groundbreaking new website, indymedia.org, had played a key role in the "Battle of Seattle" and again at the April 16, 2000, protests in Washington, D.C., that targeted the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. People around the world were challenging corporate-led globalization.

Being one of the first open publishing sites on the Internet, indymedia.org made it possible for protesters and their supporters to tell their side of the story by uploading articles, photos, audio and video, and thereby directly challenge the corporate media's version of events. This was a huge breakthrough at the time. During the week of protests in Seattle, indymedia.org received more traffic than CNN's website. Back at home in New York City, we wanted to create a local version of Indymedia that would serve as an enduring home for independent media activism.

My personal first taste of rage against filtered journalism came during my junior year at SUNY-Purchase, a state college located an hour north of the city. I enrolled in the school's new journalism program and became the first editor-in-chief of our student newspaper. We covered controversial issues such as police brutality, rape on campus and protests against the administration's secret plan to build a huge art gallery in the middle of a student square.

On several occasions the journalism program director stole the final copy of the paper and edited it to put the college in a more positive light. I was outraged. This woman had enjoyed a distinguished career in journalism. She saw me as her protégé at first, and promised me a scholarship to the Columbia School of Journalism and an internship at the *Wall Street Journal*. But when I loudly protested her censorship of critical issues, she told me I was through, because "that's not how the real world works."

Shortly after I graduated college in 1999, I got a $500 grant from the Puffin Foundation to publish a DIY paper. We used that money to print the inaugural issue of *The Indypendent*, although that first issue was called *The UNst8ed*. It was published in conjunction with protests at the U.N. Millennium Summit, a gathering of world leaders that sought to give a veneer of legitimacy to a number of pro-corporate policies backed by wealthy nations.

Honestly, the first issue looked terrible! Yet, when we handed it out people were very supportive of what we were trying to do. Someone who heard about what we were doing gave us free office space near 29th Street and Park Avenue, which was a game-changer for the project.

After that first issue circulated, more people came to our meetings to work on the paper as well as start a video team and an internet radio station. The second issue — now called *The Indypendent* — also got a badly needed makeover!

When 9/11 happened a year later, we had already established a fairly regular publishing schedule. But the events of 9/11 pushed us to a whole new level. It is at times like these, when people are asking critical questions and the cracks in the system are visible, that independent media can make the biggest difference. The impact we made by distributing our post-9/11 special issues at Union Square, where ordinary people were asking extraordinary questions, is what truly ignited the passion for independent reporting that still shines in *The Indypendent* today. Please keep supporting this steadfast print publication!

A co-founder of The Indypendent, *Ana Nogueira has worked as a video producer at* Democracy Now! *and directed the documentary film* Roadmap to Apartheid. *She is currently the proprietor of the Starr Bar, a nightlife venue in Bushwick, Brooklyn, that celebrates and supports movements for social justice.*

COVERING 9/11

By Mike Burke

I thought a bomb had gone off. It was 9:59 a.m. I was working in an office building on Nassau Street, blocks away from the burning Twin Towers. Our building shook. My colleagues and I could see a stream of people running on the sidewalk. Then the sky went black. Dust engulfed our building. The South Tower had collapsed, 56 minutes after being struck. Thirty minutes later the sky went black again.

The police soon ordered a full evacuation of lower Manhattan. Along with thousands of other stunned New Yorkers I walked home across the Williamsburg Bridge, occasionally looking back in horror at the plume of smoke hanging over where the World Trade Center had stood just hours before.

By the time I got home, the calls for war had already begun.

Former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger appeared on CNN saying, "There is only one way to begin to deal with people like this, and that is you have to kill some of them even if they are not immediately directly involved in this thing."

The New York Post ran a column titled "Simply Kill the Bastards." Steve Dunleavy wrote, "As for cities or countries that host these worms, bomb them into basketball courts."

I returned to Manhattan the next day, first stopping at a vigil in Union Square and then heading to the NYC Indymedia office, where *The Indypendent* was housed, for an emergency editorial meeting to begin work on a special issue.

I recently uncovered my notes from that meeting. Some of the topics raised: "civil liberties," "anti-Arab," "what kind of war," "anti-war movement," "airport security," "history of Middle East conflict" and "right-wing nuts."

Within 24 hours the paper was published.

The special issue featured a photograph of downtown Manhattan after the towers collapsed. A box detailing ways to help ran down the left side. The lead article, "After Shocks," described the city in the first 24 hours after the attack, when families were desperately searching for missing loved ones while others held impromptu vigils in Union and Washington Squares.

At the time we still didn't know how many people had died or who was behind the attack.

Other articles in the issue included "Media Goes to War," "We Need Real Security," "Timeline of Lost Liberty" and "Rising Hatred," about the backlash against Arab- and Muslim-American immigrant communities. The back page featured original first-person reports from Ground Zero.

My contribution to our special issue was headlined "How Should We Respond." I interviewed leading peace activists, including Dave McReynolds of the War Resisters League and Carmen Trotta of the Catholic Worker Movement. The article's message was a call for peace. After recounting the cries for revenge, I wrote, "But wouldn't fighting terror with terror propel the nation, and indeed the world into a war where there may be no winners?"

In the months after the September 11 attacks I decided to quit my full-time job in order to focus full time on journalism. I joined the staff at *Democracy Now!* just in time to help produce a special on the first anniversary of the attacks. Today I am still at *Democracy Now!*, still covering many of the same issues we identified in that special issue of *The Indypendent*.

Mike Burke is editorial director at Democracy Now! *and a co-founder of* The Indypendent.

A YOUNG REPORTER FINDS HIS CALLING

By Alex Kane

In the mid-2000s, I was a left-wing high school student growing up in the suburbs outside New York City. I was heavily influenced by folk punk music which took me to New York City and the Lower East Side to see a lot of shows. I got involved with the local Food Not Bombs chapter, and went to Tompkins Square Park to serve food. At the ABC No Rio event space, there were always copies of The Indypendent there. I remember being impressed with the paper.

Once I moved to the city to attend college, I started volunteering with The Indy. At first, I just came to meetings and then I started taking shifts handing out papers in the subway at rush hour. I came more for the exposure to left-wing activism than out of ambition to be a journalist. But, I eventually began covering stories: a profile of a group that put out a weekly online calendar of protests across the city; protests for affordable housing led by homeless people, a venerable antiwar organization debating whether to reap millions of dollars from the sale of a prized piece of real estate. My first stories weren't very well written as I recall, but they were well edited.

The Indy just welcomed me in with open arms and recognized that I could contribute to a journalistic enterprise that was serious and rigorously edited, and was not wedded to the sectarian politics of the left. It was about covering the world as it is – both the shitty parts but also recognizing the good people in this city and nationwide that are trying to do something better.

A signal moment for me was when Israel invaded Gaza in December 2008 in the waning days of the George W. Bush administration. It was called Operation Cast Lead and I remember being taken aback by it. I was raised secular Jewish in a household that was pro-union but not very political. Zionism was in the background, but it was never a part of my daily life.

The following year, when there was the call for internationals to participate in a Gaza Freedom March. I decided to go. Some Indy people chipped in to my fund, and I made it to Egypt and then on to Gaza. I wrote about it for The Indypendent and I began to write for other outlets as well, MondoWeiss in particular, about what I was seeing.

I continued covering issues related to Israel-Palestine and how that conflict impacts the United States as a freelancer for a variety of left publications over the years. Today, I am a senior reporter at Jewish Currents which I think does a very good job of covering issues of interest to the Jewish Left. The basic principles that The Indy taught me of being curious and principled and using mainstream journalistic convention while challenging the mainstream frame of how to discuss and think about politics is an ethos I have built on throughout my freelance career and now my career at Jewish Currents.

DISCOVERING AOC

By Elia Gran

My journey with *The Indypendent* began in the spring of 2015 when I returned from a two-week trip to Madrid and Barcelona with a group of activists from the United States. The journey's objective was to share and exchange experiences with Spanish social movements while celebrating the fourth anniversary of the Indignado movement, which had been one of the inspirations for Occupy Wall Street. We also had front-row seats to municipal elections where former housing rights activist Ada Colau was elected mayor of Barcelona.

Upon our return, we held a number of public events including one at CUNY's Murphy Institute, where the *Indy*'s Editor-in-Chief John handed me a copy of the paper and invited me to my first *Indy* editorial meeting. I had heard of the paper from one of my colleagues from the trip who was preparing a two-page photo essay for the subsequent issue.

At my first editorial meeting, people were packed in the back of a Middle Eastern restaurant across the street from the *Indy*'s tiny office at the Brooklyn Commons. There were rich political discussions punctuated by outbursts of laughter as we skewered the latest follies and misdeeds of the rich and the powerful. A new issue was slowly emerging in front of me. I wasn't sure where I fit in, but I sensed this was a space where you had the freedom and the support to make your own path.

I started helping John in the office with small tasks like updating the subscriber list and helping with outreach. As the months passed, I took on more tasks and wanted to help even more people access the *Indy*. I organized an initiative to record the authors of articles in the paper reading their creations, introduced the *Indy* to new social media platforms and was tapped to be the co-host of a new weekly *Indy* news program on WBAI-99.5 FM along with Lydia McMullen-Laird. The show continues to this day.

One unforgettable *Indy* moment was covering Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's historic 2018 run for Congress. It was a sunny spring morning when John asked me to accompany him to Queens to take photos of the candidate at her campaign office's opening. At that time, I didn't know who she was or everything she was capable of. Yet, just by the energy she gave off and the way she held the whole room full of supporters, I was mesmerized. In the new issue that came out a few days later, my photo of AOC speaking to a crowd outside the 90th Street-Elmhurst Avenue subway station in Queens made the cover. Before *The New Yorker, Time, Vanity Fair, Rolling Stone*, et al would put her on their cover, we did. We spent the next month relentlessly distributing the paper, especially in Queens subway stations. And then AOC rocked the Democratic Party, defeating 10-term incumbent Joe Crowley in their primary. It was a great feeling. We had been there, and we had called it.

I subsequently returned to my hometown of Barcelona. In January 2020, I started working as a communication advisor for the Department of Health, Caring and Aging of Barcelona weeks before Spain became one of the first countries to be slammed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Communicating amid this crisis to a city of more than 1.6 million people and working with our team to steer resources to Barcelona's most vulnerable residents was an all-consuming challenge. Looking back, I don't think I could have met the moment without the more than three years I spent working on *The Indypendent*.

I STARTED COVERING MY NEIGHBORHOOD

By Rico Cleffi

Some years ago, a building a few doors down from my apartment collapsed on a construction crew, crushing a few of the workers. One of the big TV network affiliates sent a camera crew to get witness reactions. I approached the reporter and explained that he should talk to my immediate neighbors who had been fighting the building's landlord for years and had actually won an injunction against him after their own building had been structurally damaged. The reporter looked at me like this was the craziest thing on earth. Then he said, "That's not what happened. I'm the journalist, and you are not."

The story he filed consisted of superficial man-on-the-street reactions to the terrible "accident." The tragedy wasn't really an accident, but a predictable outcome of a for-profit housing system built on cutting corners and exploiting labor. That didn't matter for our TV news reporter who has gone on to win several awards for his ability to deliver lines in front of a camera.

Throughout my life, I've had several similar experiences where I've witnessed something happen first-hand and corporate media contorts the incident in a way that has little to do with the truth. Maybe you have gone to a protest where the police rush the crowd, beating people with impunity. Shortly after you check the news reports and learn of the "violent protesters" who "clashed" with the cops. My experience with the TV reporter was that kind of scenario.

The Indypendent is so different from conventional journalism because it belongs to its readers and writers and the various social movements that inform its reporting. In some neighborhoods, the red and white boxes hailing "A free paper for a free people" and the stories contained on the newsprint therein are as much a part of the streetscape as graffiti or bodegas. The *Indy* is not owned by a corporation or big advertisers, foundation donors, or a "vanguard party of the proletariat." This paper is a real public good, and like all public goods, it needs to be nurtured and supported.

My own involvement with the *Indy* came after I got tired of the way journalists were covering some of the pitched housing struggles in my Brooklyn neighborhood. Too much of the reporting I was seeing fell on the real-estate-porn side of things ("This new luxury condo tower will leave you salivating"). I have years of writing and research experience, and I've read enough news sources to know when a story is lacking critical content. I would send established journalists information on developers' various conflicts of interest. I was usually met with dismissal. "That's just the way the world works," was a common refrain. It was clear that some of these people were so invested in the status quo that they couldn't deign to cover stories of vital importance. By contrast, when I contacted the *Indy* asking them to cover these issues, the response was, "Why don't you write it up and we'll take a look?"

Starting in 2017, *The Indypendent* gave me a platform to delve into the type of stories that I would like to read. Corporate landlords and the tenants fighting them, the ongoing attempts to privatize NYCHA, homelessness, the reactionary anti-shelter movement—these are some of the issues I've been able to explore. That some of these stories have been picked up and utilized by tenant and community groups in their campaigns makes this work that much more rewarding.

Like everything else in this society, it takes money to make this happen. I know, I know, these are rough times for all of us. If you are able to contribute anything, please consider supporting this worthwhile project. And maybe the next time a building collapses on your block, you can help us tell the story of what really happened.

FROM OFFICE MANAGER TO MANAGING EDITOR

By Amba Guerguerian

In college, I learned that 90% of the media was owned by six major corporations. I wanted to be a part of the alternative. I found out about Indymedia, a decentralized global network of anti-capitalist media collectives that was launched at the 1999 Seattle WTO protests. At its peak, there were more than 200 local chapters around the world producing websites, newspapers, radio shows and more about radical social movements and the issues they were fighting for.

Yet when I visited the indymedia.org website, it felt like a relic. Before me were the digital ruins of a once-thriving organization. Was I too late? Almost.

Around the 20th anniversary of the Indymedia boom, I heard about *The Indypendent* (the "y" in its name hints at its origins) on *Democracy Now!* There was a social-justice newspaper here in New York City that launched as a part of Indymedia and was somehow still flourishing two decades later with a print edition distributed in outdoor news boxes and at public libraries across the city, a website updated on a near-daily basis and a weekly radio show.

I noticed most people working on the *Indy* were volunteers. I quickly sent in my résumé and was invited by the papers' editors to attend the February 2020 editorial meeting. Within minutes of arriving, I was sweating profusely — because I was nervous but also because the *Indy*'s small office, wall-papered in old issue covers, was packed with people feverishly discussing subjects that I had a lot to say about. I felt at home, surrounded by other political junkies.

I quickly began writing articles and doing a hodgepodge of volunteer work for the paper. When a part-time staff position as administrative manager opened up, I was thrilled to be tapped for the role. Over the course of five years at the *Indy*, I was promoted to associate editor and then managing editor, eventually leading a new generation of aspiring young journalists.

I was able to produce a lot of reporting during my tenure at the paper. I deeply researched topics such as inhumane conditions in Rikers, the NYPD's brutality against protesters, ICE's detention operations in northern New Jersey, the influx of immigrants coming to New York City, and pro-Palestine protest here in the city and the repression it faces.

People who read the *Indy* may not realize how much of a grassroots effort it is. A small team works diligently to make each issue possible. They run around the city cleaning newspaper boxes, going to the printing press, handing out the paper at protests. They work with countless organizers, intellectuals and community members in order to produce the news they feel is vital to understanding current events in New York City.

And the *Indy* is the city's only truly progressive newspaper you can find on the streets, in the library and online — all for free. I think that's one of the most enlightening things about the *Indy*. It's free.

THE INDY IS NEW YORK

By Nicholas Powers

Do you want the truth? I mean the kind of truth that makes you change your life. A lot of people, myself would say no thanks, I'm good. Who wants that responsibility? Let me be. The new *Golden Bachelor* is on.

Once a month, a little miracle happens. The *Indy* is published. I open the red box on the corner and smell freshly printed paper. It's like smelling a fresh loaf of bread. A lot of New Yorkers must feel the same way because for the love of God, they actually put away cellphones and read a print publication! At cafes, on trains and buses, on stoops; we read the *Indy*.

I love seeing a reader furrow their brows as they turn pages. Next, they focus and hold the *Indy* like a food tray. I see lips like purse strings pulled tight as they finish the article. Often, I see the reader look away, nodding gently before returning to finish the *Indy*. I'm not telepathic but I think they are remembering what it is to read the truth.

Truth takes getting used to. The *Indy* is not glossy or sanitized. It's gritty and sweats. The *Indy* is not shilling lies for corporations. It has real people's hopes and fears. The *Indy* is not filled with jargon. It speaks like the street. The *Indy* is us.

It's wild to think that this tiny miracle is 25 years old. Here, especially. New York is one of the loudest cities in the world. The eye-burning neon signs and jumbo screens in Times Square and screens in the taxis, the ads and commercials, all selling the American Dream. Yet every month the *Indy* hits the streets and we read it, hungrily. I know, I see stacks gobbled quickly.

Why? The *Indy* tells us the one thing we need to hear. Another world is possible. When it reports on New Yorkers banging pots and cheering first responders from rooftops during COVID or chanting Black Lives Matters, or growing food in city gardens in the Bronx, or stopping ICE from grabbing innocent migrants, the *Indy* is saying, hey look in the mirror, see how much you care about other people. See how human you are?

It's a truth we need because we are not going to get it anywhere else. Wherever you turn, New Yorkers are told by corporations to buy this or that, told by politicians don't dream, it's dangerous, leave the future to us. Sure you can change your fashion or job or lovers but don't change your consciousness. Against all that is the *Indy*, the bright red rose growing from concrete.

I have written for the *Indy* for 20 years. We have grown up together. I love the *Indy*. I love the people at the *Indy*.

Now it's time for New York to love the *Indy* back. Take a trip with me. Imagine dashing to the train and you get to the platform and you see the red lights vanishing in the tunnel. You sit down, pissed. A platform bodega has some snacks, water and newspapers. You grab a bottle and see the *Indy* next to *The Final Call* and *The New York Post*. You didn't realize it's a daily now.

You look at the cover and laugh; it shows the governor and Republican senators, playing with the MTA like toy trains. Their eyes are replaced with dollar signs. The headline reads, "Greedy Pols Threaten Fare Hike!" You lick a forefinger and turn to the article. You read how instead of refusing to tax the wealthy or bring in green energy to lower the

Continued on next page

THE INDY IS NY

Continued from previous page

cost, they want to raise the fares to $5 a ride.

Your train comes and you get in. *The Indy* is in everyone's hands. People are sharing it, cursing at the Governor and jabbing fingers in the air. Inside *the Indy* are the dates, times and location for the protest against the fare hikes. And a link to the new *Indy* website newsfeed.

Your phone is blowing up with texts. Your friends and family are already at the march. You call out of work, and get off at the Union Square stop. Ever since Mayor Zohran Mamdani and the Democratic Socialists came to power, workers have become more emboldened to use strikes to put a brake on the 1 percent.

You trot up the stairs and into a massive, energized protest. Signs bob. Talk rises into a tornado of words above the crowd. You hear a whistle, turn and see your boy and you hug, he passes you a sign. The march begins like a giant aircraft carrier leaving port, giant, steady, unstoppable. *The Indy* is rolled up and tucked into your back pocket. A lot of copies of it are everywhere, in hands, under armpits, in pockets, used as a makeshift sign, used as a makeshift megaphone. It leads New York forward like a treasure map.

We live between two New Yorks. The one that is. The one that can be. Only a working class, people-first media can get us from one to the other. *The Indypendent* is it. Show it some love.

THE INDY'S PROJECT 2026

New York City is on the cusp of electing a socialist mayor powered by an unprecedented grassroots movement. It's a moment filled with possibility and fraught with danger. While New York turns the page on the corrupt politics of the past, an authoritarian regime consolidates power in Washington, DC.

For 25 years, THE INDY has covered social justice movements across the city like no other media outlet in New York City. Now, with the Left ascendant in the largest and most influential city in the United States, we're looking to do more in 2026 – more coverage in print and online, more editions of the paper, more copies printed and distributed, more podcasts and live events.

And we need your help. Call it **THE INDY'S PROJECT 2026**.

Our initial goal is to raise $100,000 by the end of 2025 – twice what we've ever asked of our readers in past year-end fund drives. If we can meet our goal, it will give us the runway we need to begin bringing this vision into existence.

USE THE QR CODE ABOVE, OR VISIT INDYPENDENT.ORG/DONATE TO CONTRIBUTE VIA PAYPAL, OR VENMO, OR SEND A CHECK TO THE INDYPENDENT//388 ATLANTIC AVENUE, 2ND FL//BROOKLYN, NY 11217

EXTRA! EXTRA! HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM MAKES A COMEBACK

ONLY 1% OF NYC STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO STUDENT JOURNALISM IN THEIR SCHOOLS. THE YOUTH JOURNALISM COALITION IS FIGHTING TO CHANGE THIS

ELSIE CARSON-HOLT

J-DAY: *Autumn Wynn, a student journalist at Park Slope Collegiate High, speaks at a Sept. 16 rally at City Hall to promote the expansion of student journalism courses.*

By Elsie Carson-Holt

New York City is the media capital of the United States, if not the globe. And yet, while there are countless media outlets headquartered here, only 1 percent of its public high school students have access to journalism programming at their schools.

The Youth Journalism Coalition is fighting to change this. YJC, an offshoot of media nonprofit The Bell, is made up of students, teachers, newsrooms, and higher education institutions that want to expand New York City public school students' access to journalism courses.

Their main initiative is "Journalism for All," which launched a year ago. The initiative has already made an impact—causing the City Council to pass legislation requiring new public data on access to journalism courses and student newspapers.

This data, which was released in September revealed that only about 3,200 out of 290,000 public high school students had access to journalism programs or courses in their school.

Following the release of the data, students rallied on Sept. 16 in front of City Hall to promote the expansion of student journalism courses across New York City public high schools. YJC called it "J-day."

Jeremiah Dickerson was one of the students who attended J-Day at City Hall. Dickerson is a senior at Williamsburg Charter High School, and wants to pursue a career in journalism. However, his school, like most schools in New York City, offered no journalism courses, or even a student newspaper.

"So for me, as someone who wanted to get into journalism, I feel like I'm helpless, because there's no real resource for me to get into journalism and get hands-on training, until my friend Dari introduced me to The Bell," Dickerson said.

Dickerson applied for an internship program at The Bell, which he was accepted into. There, he worked on a video about credit recovery and its disproportionate impacts on minority students for The Bell's podcast series *Miss Education*.

It filled the gaps that Dickerson felt that he was missing in his own education. "There's a lot of theater schools for high school students, where they could go and they could definitely be in the theater realm. There's a lot of schools just mainly focused on that, where you have a lot of experience, and they work you from the ground up before you go into that internship."

Through YJC and The Bell, Dickerson gained those hard skills and gained access to opportunities like workshops, other journalism internships, and most of all, doing what he loves. "They [YJC] always give me the platform and the opportunity to make a change in my community, and I feel like that's what I was set out to do," he said.

EXPANDING PROGRAMS

One of the primary goals of "Journalism for All" is to get more journalism courses in New York City public schools. In collaboration with the CUNY School of Journalism, YJC has launched a pilot program in 30 schools across the city, to implement journalism courses within schools' electives offering. They are looking to expand the program in coming years, said Sophie Mode, the program associate at YJC. YJC leadership was also extremely intentional about which schools received access to the programming, teachers applied and were selected based on personal and administrative commitment, as well as demographic factors.

When looking at schools to select, "we chose to prioritize where the need is greatest, where there's the greatest lack of existing opportunities, across many different kinds of specialized programs, including journalism," Mode said.

"We really focused on selecting schools that are most often not given these opportunities, as a lot of the journalism programs in schools are where opportunity is generally concentrated, and that tends to go along lines of class and race."

YJC reports that their cohort is uniquely diverse, with many Black and Hispanic students, students who are economically disadvantaged, as well as schools with multilingual learners and schools serving students with disabilities.

Autumn Wynn, 17, is a senior who attends Park Slope Collegiate School, one of the schools selected to be in the cohort. Like Dickerson, Wynn also got involved with YJC through The Bell and produced a vodcast for their *Miss Education* series.

Wynn said she loved to talk and to write and journalism combines both, but she "isn't totally sold on becoming a journalist," though she knows she wants her career to involve communication in some way. Still, Wynn is an intern at the Paley Center for Media and was selected to be a PBS Summer Academy Fellow last summer.

Thanks to Journalism for All, Wynn doesn't have to commute or apply for an internship to get hands-on journalism experience. Because of the program, she is taking a journalism course and writing an advice column for her school's news website.

Wynn says that getting prior journalism experience has been extremely helpful going into the journalism course. However, many other students didn't get the internship experience she had and struggle with the course as a result.

"I've been fortune enough to where I've been put in spaces where, if they ask me 'Autumn, I need you to crank out an article, I need you to crank out an email,' I can do it," she told me.

Continued on page 25

TEN FREE MANHATTAN MUSEUMS TO ENJOY

By J. Barnes

In the past decade, a rash of Instagrammable museums have popped up in Manhattan, offering glitzy visuals for social media at high prices. The Banksy Museum charges $20–$30 for admission and does not even have any original Banksy artworks on display. The Museum of Optical Illusions charges $30–$50 for admission. The Museum of Ice Cream designates itself as an "Experium" and charges $40–$70 for admission. However, alternatives exist. Manhattan has dozens of cheap or even free museums that play an invaluable role in preserving the unique history of their respective communities.

The Museum of Reclaimed Urban Space (MORUS) in the East Village chronicles clashes between grassroots organizers and local authorities in Lower Manhattan in the '80s and '90s. Located in a storefront and its basement, the museum features photographs, zines and footage from battles between police and residents who were fighting to maintain their squatter's rights in abandoned buildings turned into apartments and empty lots turned into community gardens. The museum has three permanent exhibits dedicated to the history of reclaiming abandoned buildings and empty lots as well as community activism promoting car-free spaces and bicycle advocacy. MORUS also offers walking tours of the Lower East Side every Saturday and Sunday at 3pm.

MORUS is open 12pm to 5pm every Wednesday to Sunday. Admission is free; a $5 donation is suggested.

Dia Chelsea in Chelsea's art district is a branch of the Dia Art Foundation, an international arts nonprofit with its largest gallery in Beacon, N.Y. Dia Chelsea specializes in modern art, usually showcasing two artists at a time, though it currently devotes its entire space to an exhibition by Duane Linkletter. Aside from its galleries, Dia Chelsea also features part of Walter Beuys's "7,000 Oaks" exhibit, the artist's initiative to plant 7,000 oak trees with accompanying basalt obelisks next to them.

Dia Chelsea is open Wednesday to Saturday, 12pm to 6pm Admission is free. The Dia Art Foundation also maintains two permanent exhibits close by, both in Greenwich Village and both by land artist Walter De Maria. The New York Earth Room is a room filled with earth, and the Broken Kilometer consists of a kilometer broken into 1,000 meter-long brass rods. Both are open Wednesday to Sunday, 12pm to 3pm and 3:30pm to 6pm Admission is also free.

The Center for Art, Research and Alliances (CARA) in Greenwich Village is an arts nonprofit, a research center and a publisher rolled into one. It showcases artworks by 20th and 21st century artists, especially emerging artists or more obscure members of the New York arts scene. CARA opened in June 2022 after spending five years gestating in the minds of various creatives, researchers and publishers. It has displayed work by artists like Javier Tellez, Tina Girouard and Ligia Lewis.

CARA is a research center analyzing various aspects of modern art, the results of which are often shown in its galleries. It also maintains a printing press and bookstore selling zines, children's books, photo books and many more works of artistic literature. Aside from hosting launch parties for exhibitions and books, the center also features many other types of free public programming such as music, lectures and salons.

CARA is open Wednesday to Saturday, 11am to 6pm and Sunday, 12pm to 6pm Admission is free.

The Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) in Chinatown chronicles the history of Chinese people in the United States, from the first Chinese to land in New York City, to the 18th century gold miners and railway diggers in the West, to the present day. The museum has a large permanent collection chronicling immigration and the role of Chinese immigrants in America's development as well as the history of Sinophobia in the government and in Hollywood. The museum also has exhibits detailing the development of Chinatowns in the United States and the role of Chinese people in New York City's history.

The museum displays art and works by contemporary artists, including a past exhibit by students from the local Transfiguration School. Aside from its exhibits, MOCA hosts various types of programming, such as walking tours in Chinatown, lectures from historians and artists, and celebrations of Chinese festivities.

MOCA is open Wednesday to Saturday, 11am to 6pm and Sunday, 12pm to 6pm Admission is pay-what-you-will for all New York City residents.

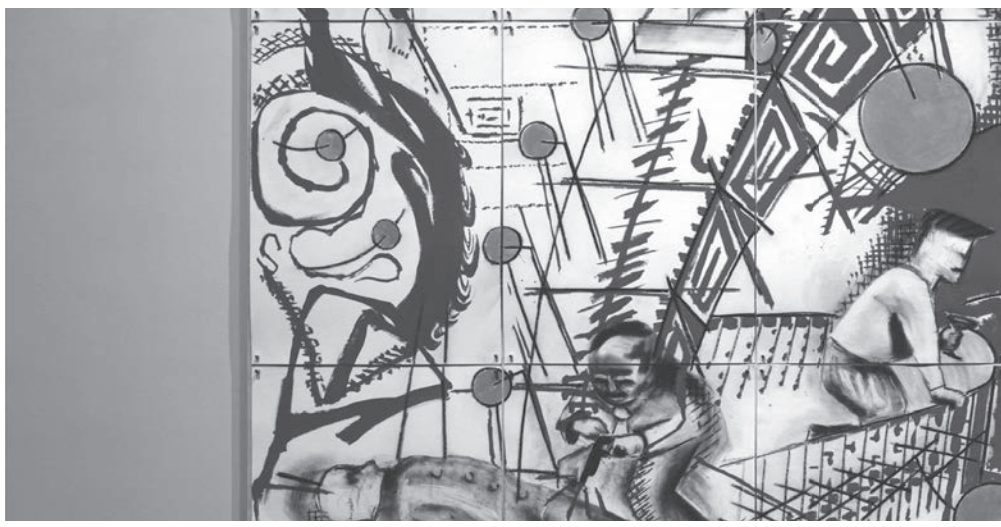
The Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art in SoHo exists to preserve and publicize art by queer and trans artists from all over the world. Its origins lie in a series of exhibits held by artists Charles Leslie and Fritz Lohman in their SoHo loft in the '60s, '70s and '80s that showcased the work of local gay artists in Lower Manhattan. The Leslie-Lohman Organization was formally established in 1987 at the height of the AIDS epidemic to save the artwork of dead or dying queer artists from destruction. It became a formal museum in 2016.

The Leslie-Lohman maintains a rotating display of typically two or three exhibits at a time. It has shown the works of creators like Catherine Opie, Robert Mapplethorpe and Andy Warhol, among many others. The museum also hosts free public programs like exhibition openings, creative workshops and discussion-based salons. It also publishes queer and trans works and maintains a library of LGBTQIA+ literature.

Leslie-Lohman is open Wednesday, 12pm to 5pm and Thursday to Sunday, 12pm to 6pm Admission is pay-what-you-will; a $10 donation is suggested.

The Drawing Center in SoHo specializes exclusively in drawing: Its relevance in modern culture, how it contributes to the future of art and its creative value. The museum was founded by Martha Beck in 1977 as part of SoHo's artistization. As Lower Manhattan deindustrialized, leaving warehouses and lofts behind, artists rushed in to fill the space, despite its shaky legality. Beck wanted a museum where local artists could have their work showcased, and to that end she started the center, drawing on experience from her time as a curator at the Museum of Modern Art.

The Drawing Center has displayed art by emerging artists like Jasper Johns, Carroll Dunham,



Kara Walker and Shahzia Sikander. Aside from drawings by New York-based artists, the center often has drawings on display by renowned artists and designers, such as Pablo Picasso, Christopher Wren and Donatello. The Drawing Center's programming includes pop-up drawing workshops, live drawing sessions and art auctions.

The Drawing Center is currently installing a new exhibition set to open Oct. 17. When it reopens, its hours will be Wednesday to Sunday, 12pm to 6pm. Admission is free.

The Print Center in Chelsea deals with artistic printmaking, including lithographs, woodcuts, etchings, risographs and other forms. Like the Drawing Center, the Print Center is the only nonprofit organization in New York dedicated solely to the study, preservation and display of prints. Since its founding in 1995 by Anne Coffin, the center has displayed prints by the likes of Albrecht Durer, K.P. Brehmer, Bruce Conner and Kiki Smith, among others. Its programming consists of readings, tours and guided discussions, along with many other events for Print Center members.

The Print Center recently installed a new exhibition that opened Sept. 18. Its hours are Wednesday to Saturday, 12pm to 6pm Admission is free.

The Center for Architecture in Greenwich Village is the American Institute of Architects' cultural institute, offering numerous programs and workshops to the public as well as a gallery space for architectural exhibits. Since 2003, the space has presented exhibitions about the New York Public Library's reading rooms, design techniques for combating climate change, anti-earthquake architecture and many more.

For adults, the Center for Architecture provides free lectures, panel discussions and design workshops. It offers numerous programs for schoolchildren to hone design skills and gain a better understanding of architectural techniques and theory. The center also hosts the annual Archtober festival, a celebration of architecture that lasts the month of October.

The Center for Architecture is currently installing a new exhibit that will open Oct. 3. When it reopens, its hours will be Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm and Saturday, 11am to 5pm Admission is free.

The Nicholas Roerich Museum on the Upper West Side is dedicated entirely to displaying the artworks of Russian painter, writer, archeologist and philosopher Nicholas Roerich. Across three floors of a residential townhouse, it boasts an impressive array of more than 200 paintings together with sketches and drawings. The museum also contains a library preserving Roerich's thousands of letters, photographs, periodicals and other written material.

The museum's bookshop sells many books, letter collections and other writings by Roerich and his wife Helena. The museum also hosts free poetry readings, concerts and more.

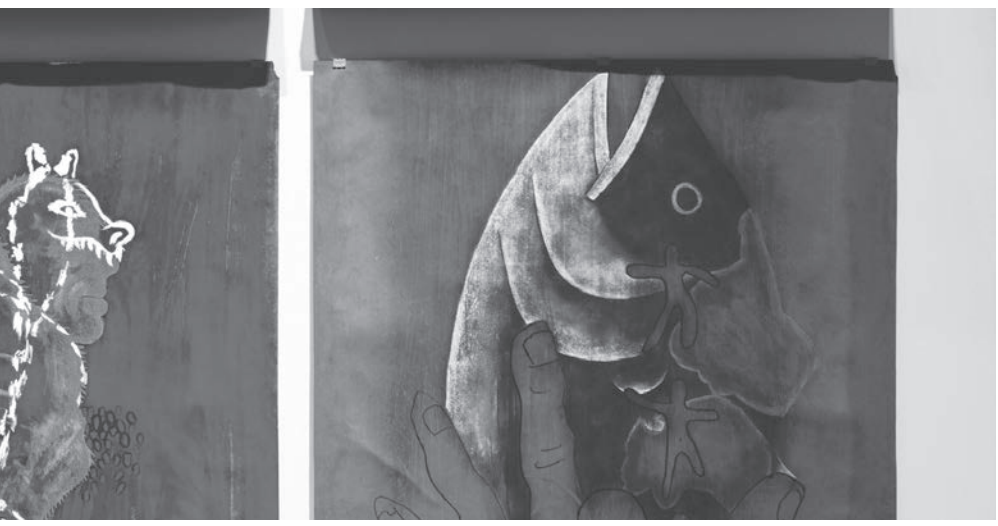
The Nicholas Roerich Museum is open Saturday to Sunday, 12pm to 5pm, and Tuesday to Friday, 12pm to 4pm Admission is free; donations are welcome.

The Mmuseumm in Tribeca is a cabinet of curiosities founded by Alex Kalman, a journalist, and the independent filmmakers the Safdie brothers. The Mmuseumm is tucked away in Cortlandt Alley. At 36 square feet, it fills a space previously occupied by a freight elevator. Kalman founded the museum in 2012 in the hopes of creating a museum whose very existence would invite speculation. Sir John Soanes' Museum in London, an eclectic assortment of archaeology and artwork, was a major inspiration.

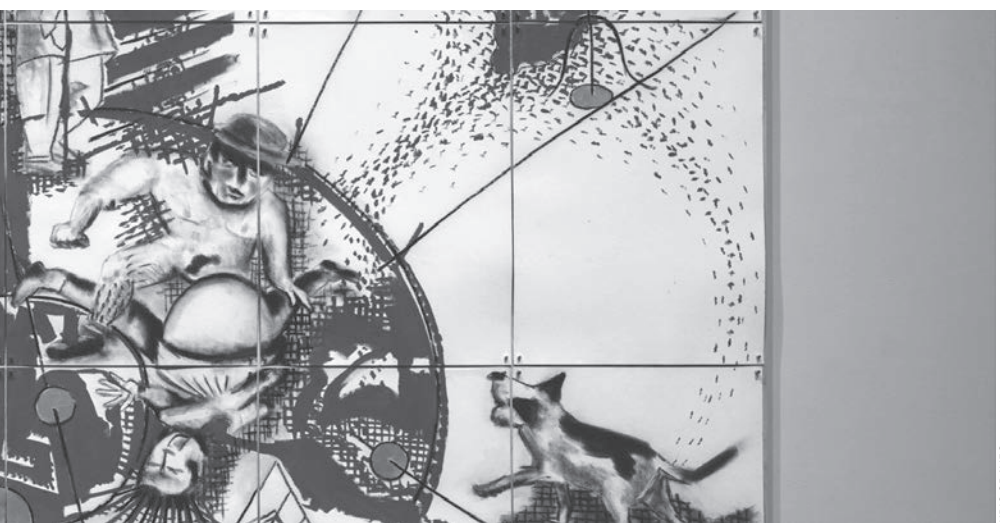
The Mmuseumm showcases small, usually everyday items (such as one of the shoes thrown at President George W. Bush by an Iraqi journalist in 2008) in batches called "seasons" with a constantly rotating display of items. One season's exhibition focused on brand knockoff products in Venezuela, Iran and other countries; another season's exhibition displayed memorabilia from oppressive regimes like North Korea and Saudi Arabia; a third focused on improvised home defense weapons.

The Mmuseumm is open Friday to Sunday, 11am to 6pm; however, its gallery's contents can be viewed at any time through slots in the doors. Three people fit in the building at a time. Admission is free; a $4 donation is suggested.

There are numerous other institutions of arts and culture all over New York City that offer free or pay-what-you-will admission to residents. And most of the city's museums feature certain days of the week or the month with free admission. Next time you have friends or family visiting from out of town or just want to ingest some culture yourself, consider not giving your money to the garish multimillion-dollar corporations that charge $50 a ticket, but giving back to some of New York's grassroots museums instead.



KRIS GRAVES



KRIS GRAVES

KRIS GRAVES

Installation views of E'wao Kagoshima: Animated Minds, on view at the Center for Art, Research and Alliances (CARA), New York, from September 20 through December 14, 2025. Courtesy the artist and CARA.

RELIVING THE BRONX'S PUNK ERA

Lost Indignation
By Becky McAuley
Shining Life, 2022, 350 pages

By David Allen Brizer

If you think you know the Bronx, you're probably wrong. Or misguided. Because a half block beyond the health care grist mill of Montefiore Hospital lie a series of quaint houses, some clapboard, some fieldstone, the once and future sites of the Museum of Bronx History the Bronx Historical Society, and the archives of these amazing collections.

The buildings are steeped in history. The Valentine-Varian House, location of the Museum, was built in 1758 by Isaac Valentine. It is the Bronx's second oldest house and the borough's oldest remaining farmhouse. Adjacent to a stretch of manicured Bronx parkland, it reminds you of a much later decidedly more humble iteration, Poe's Cottage at Kingsbridge and the Grand Concourse.

The Historical Society—despite its name, and its venerable mission—is completely up to date. Recent exhibits sponsored on site, or at the Museum, include "Uptown Rumble: Heavy Music in the Bronx" (still showing), and "Bronx Basketball Hall of Fame", curated by Derek Doward, the Hall of Fame's CEO.

I grew up here and I live nearby now. I had to take a closer look.

Dr. Steven Payne, director and archivist at the Bronx Historical Society, hosted a small gathering in the book-lined reception room of the Society, where we Zoomed online with Becky McAuley, author of *Lost Indignation*, a heads-up novel about a missing music cassette and the self-styled Lord Byrons of punk who are desperately searching for it in the Bronx and lower Westchester (Dobbs Ferry, Mount Vernon and Hastings-on-Hudson).

"Uptown Rumble" explores the little-known history of Bronx bands playing in the heavier registers of rock, opened April 24 (still going, through November 2025) at the Museum of Bronx History. The exhibit covers the underappreciated history of hard rock in the Bronx, including heavy metal, thrash metal, death metal, hardcore and more, from the 1960s through the early 2000s.

The exhibit could have no better spokesperson than McAuley, a one-time drummer herself. *Lost Indignation* is the story of Mo McGraw—who is never doing what she's supposed to be doing—and her hunt in 2017 for a rare demo tape that could propel a punk band to fame in the New York punk scene if only it hadn't gone missing.

Becky McAuley waxed energetic and expansive when asked about her book, its context, its relevance to current social realities.

COURTESY

***Becky McAuley, author of the punk rock novel* Lost Indignation.**

THE INDYPENDENT: Who are your main writing influences?

BECKY MCAULEY: Some of my inspirations include Philip Roth, Sergio De La Pava, Marisha Pessl, Zadie Smith, Marie-Helene Bertino, Joss Lake, Jennifer Egan, Paul Beattie, Mark Harris, Graham Greene and Colson Whitehead. *Lost Indignation* was also influenced by books where the plot is kicked off in the hunt for a lost object, such as *The Rebel Angels* by Robertson Davies.

What were the bands in the Bronx that mattered to you?

My favorite Bronx bands/bands with Bronx members include District 9, Irate, Billy Club Sandwich, Brass Knuckle Brigade, Fahrenheit 451, Uppercut, Starve, Rebelmatic and Crazy Eddie. Most are featured in the Uptown Rumble: Heavy Music in the Bronx exhibit at the Museum of Bronx History. And for Bronx rappers, Big Pun and Kool Keith!

Were you ever a player in a band?

I played drums in a variety of short-lived bands in the early 2000s, then joined Trenchcoat Army from 2006 to 2007 to play CBGB's before it closed. After some injuries I've made moves towards getting back behind the drum set but mostly contribute now via zines, flyers and my upcoming record label: look for the A Good Problem to Have Comp on Memory Loss Records in late 2025.

What music do you listen to?

I listen to a lot of hardcore, punk, rap and soul. Some of my favorites that are either featured in L*ost Indignation* or the soundtrack in my brain include Warzone, Supertouch, Biohazard, Killing Time, Breakdown, Outburst, Dmize, Side by Side, Major Lance, M.O.P, Gravediggaz, the Menahan Street Band, RJD2, Gene Page, Charles Bradley and Dag Nasty.

Any sociopolitical comments on your perspective as an author? Did the Bronx punksters make a political statement of any sort?

While not all Bronx hardcore bands have been overtly political, most have been on the correct side of history, from pro-worker to antiracism. Billy Club Sandwich, Irate, Ache, Rebelmatic and District 9 address social and/or political issues in their lyrics. Many classic songs within the wider New York Hard Core canon speak to antiracist themes, from Beyond – "Someday" to Cause for Alarm – "United Races". The "Uptown Rumble" exhibit also includes multiple bands with female members as well as artwork and photography from women involved in the Bronx scene.

And while *Lost Indignation* isn't a conspicuously political story, solidarity across race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and mental health differences are woven throughout the plot. Mostly it's a story about a missing demo tape and who gets to tell their version of history and the truth. It's important to make space for communities to tell their own truths and histories: as Dr. Steven Payne said of the "Uptown Rumble" exhibit in the Shining Life Fanzine Compilation, Vol. 2, "Always focus on the grassroots and involve the community every step of the way."

Talk about your interest in local politics.

I currently live in Mount Vernon, N.Y. and appreciate the hard work of our mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard and City Council members. I'd urge everyone to get involved in local politics where we may have more control over positive outcomes as a counterweight to the bleak national situation. I'm also a big fan of outgoing New York City Councilmember Justin Brannan who comes from the same music scene and has channeled the honesty, authenticity, creativity, humanity and nuance from his music career into his political career. He's even quoted in the most recent issue of my zine, "I Question Not Me."

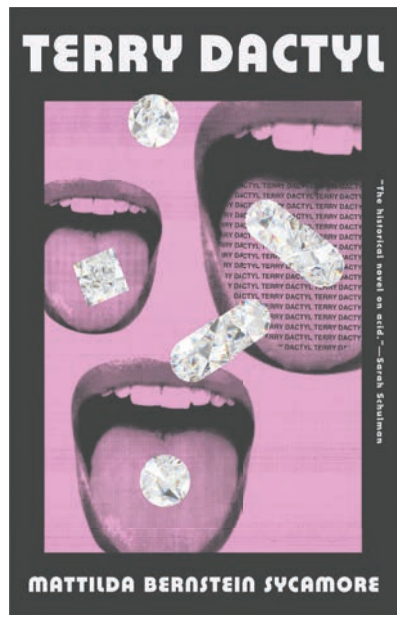
A QUEER LIFE WELL LIVED

Terry Dactyl
By Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore
Coffee House Press, 272 pages

By David Allen Brizer

Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore's latest novel, *Terry Dactyl*, is a poignant exploration of entering middle age as a trans woman reared in the shadow of loss, first from HIV/AIDS and later from COVID, gentrification, environmental devastation and incipient fascism.

But *Terry Dactyl* is not a tale of doom and gloom. Instead, it showcases powerful friendships, hot and steamy sex, meaningful work and the importance of collective protest in fostering community. It also celebrates fashion, highlighting the power of color, fabric and style to uplift the individual and create a public persona that attracts attention and makes a statement.



The book begins in Seattle, where Terry was raised by a drug and drink-addled, but immensely loving, mom and stepmom and a huge array of "aunts" and "uncles." From them, Terry learned to be bold, creative, and independent. She also learned to dismiss critics as she searched for her people and parsed her values and priorities.

A semester-long stint at Columbia University led to several decades in New York City, where she found administrative work at a Soho gallery owned by an heiress. She also found romance—deep love—cut short by AIDS. This period, the 1990s, is vividly drawn. Likewise, the club scene and the many available party drugs that Terry and her friends enjoy is presented as both dangerous and dazzling.

Still, as time passes and people age, everyday life begins to change. Some of the friends in Terry's orbit die or move away, others begin to contend with chronic illnesses and still others drift off into new social circles.

Then the COVID shutdowns hit, and Terry finds herself working and living alone. The toll of her isolation is enormous: As months pass, she becomes increasingly bereft and miserable. By now, she's given up drugs, as have her mothers and many of her friends, and when her Seattle-based BFF starts sending her real estate ads for condos in the Rainy City, she is swayed.

Unsurprisingly, the move requires a massive adjustment since the Seattle of 2020 is not the funky Seattle of Terry's childhood. Nonetheless, she is happy to be on the West Coast. As the Black Lives Matter demonstrations are organized to protest the police murder of George Floyd, and people bang on pots and pans for a daily 8:00 p.m. homage to essential workers, Terry finds her spirits lifting. At the same time, she's aware of contradictions: Many in the queer community are unabashed supporters of the police crackdowns against BLM protesters, proud that the mayor who is ordering the arrests and authorizing the use of tear gas and pepper spray is a lesbian. As Terry sees it, no amount of rainbow packaging can undo the revulsion she feels over the law-and-order pinkwashing that is on display.

It's vintage Sycamore, but *Terry Dactyl* minces no words in its explication of the ongoing debate over whether LGBTQIA+ people should pursue assimilation into mainstream society or develop a distinctly queer culture that does not mimic straight norms, and it is abundantly clear where both the author and her protagonist fall on the issue.

It's well-presented and evocative.

All told, *Terry Dactyl* is a novel about a woman who soars despite obstacles and personal challenges. By turns perceptive, touching, and occasionally funny, the book is a deep dive into what it means to live authentically as a queer progressive. It's a memorable read.

HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM

Continued from page 21

"But I feel like a lot of students in my school have not, so when we were just told to write an article a lot of people were like, 'Okay, well, how do I write an article? I don't really want to interview someone. How do I go ask someone for an interview?' so I feel like they missed those key components."

Even if Wynn and her classmates decide they don't want to become journalists, it's still important to her that they receive some kind of journalism training.

"Student journalism, whether that person wants to write or not, is similar to math. You have to know it," said Wynn. "You have to be able to know how to write creatively and academically, you have to be able to learn how to think and advocate for yourself."

CHARLIE KIRK

Continued from page 8

of history is that the right wing worldview justifies oppressive systems. Pick your poison. Whether it's slavery, mass incarceration, women not having the right to vote to women hitting the glass ceiling, workers exploited in coal mines to being exploited by Walmart; always the Right has a reason to say inequality is good, is natural, is God blessed.

Which is why the murder of Kirk is not about Kirk, it's about advancing a political agenda. Which is why a sadistic, really gleeful call for vengeance was the instant reaction from Trump to MAGA media. The desire to be a victim was always a desire to legitimize violence against those that right-wing ideology identifies as being inferior, even disgusting people. The grieving over a lost leader was not the goal. Cruelty was.

LEMMINGS OFF A CLIFF

Trump is targeting liberal NGO's and donors. Everyday Republicans report social media posts to get liberals and leftists fired. They are trying to censor how Democrats talk about Republicans. Now, "fascists" and "Nazis" are supposed to be banned words because they incite violence. The hypocrisy stinks. Just think about how Trump talks about Democrats and the Left.

Yet, entertain them. If they say, now that life is precious and we should not use words that can possibly incite violence, what about words that actually kill? I don't mean as an exaggeration. The words in Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act, will cut a trillion dollars in spending from Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program. One University of Pennsylvania study says between now and 2039, around 93,000 Americans will die early because of those cuts.

Trump's DOGE team, led by Elon Musk, cut USAID's budget, which was $42 billion in 2023 by 80 percent, which includes AIDS medicine. Again, words do kill. The cuts have killed nearly 500,000, many children so far. If the cuts stay in place until 2030, over 14 million will die.

ISOLATE THE RIGHT

What do we do? First, don't get sucked into the MAGA hallucination. They are hypocrites. They are so blinded by ideology, they are putting all of us at risk, including themselves.

Second, don't listen to centrist Democrats who think offering olive branches to fascists and going into a defensive crouch is going to save the nation. It won't. It never has.

Follow the simple formula. Unite the Left around reality. What is that reality? Trump and MAGA have overreached. They are turning Middle America off. They haven't mobilized the masses. They look…weird.

Next, meet people where they are and move the Middle to us. Most people don't want to live in the MAGA Christian Nationalist, Bible-based America. They don't want comedians canceled or Medicaid gutted or the rich getting tax cuts they don't need..

Isolate the Right. Show the bizarro world they want to force us into. Turn all those cellphones and cameras, document the effects of their ideas on real people, in real time.

Have a vision. Point beyond the headlines. On one side, Trump leads MAGA off a cliff. On our side, Bernie, AOC and Zohran point to an America where you don't have to starve, or be worried about healthcare or joblessness, because there is enough for everyone and enough work to be done, repairing the Earth, to last generations.

A TASTE OF AFFORDABILITY

CREAMY SPINACH & SAUSAGE WEEKNIGHT PASTA

FEEDS: **6–8 people**
COOKING TIME: **22 minutes**

By John Morris

If you're like me, your recommended Internet rabbit-holes include restaurant reviews, viral ramen-hacks and thousands of content creators trying to convince you that their one-pan, five-ingredient, ready-in-15-minutes-dinner is what you should be cooking tonight. The endless barrage of options can be overwhelming and I don't want to be another voice adding to the noise. Instead, what I'm hoping to do here is showcase a simple recipe, coming from someone who has spent the last three years on-and-off in professional kitchens and doesn't often have the energy to come home at night to chiffonade my mirepoix and sous vide my foie gras.

Good food shouldn't exhaust you to make, and food doesn't need to be complex to be satisfying. Many times I have gotten home from a long day of whatever exhaustive nonsense the modern world has thrown at me and all I have wanted to do is waste my money on some expensive delivery app, knowing that I'll have to wait 50 minutes for someone braving the bustling city streets on a bicycle to hand-deliver me lukewarm food wrapped in plastic. It is on these days that I remember how my mother would find the energy to cook dinner every night after working thankless shifts as a public school librarian. She was often able to feed five of us for dinner with some left for the next day, so I'm saying you can feasibly get 6-8 servings out of this pasta, so long as you're not feeding lumberjacks or starving college students.

It's easy to make this dish vegetarian by simply swapping out the sausage for mushrooms, which I have seen omnivores eat without complaint or any knowledge of what they are missing. Add your favorite spices or whatever you like to better suit it to your taste, or simply to use up vegetables lying in your fridge. I can't promise that this recipe will change your life: It's just a bowl of pasta. But it's cheap, simple, easy and quick to make, and has never once failed to put a smile on my face.

INGREDIENTS

1 LB OF PASTA: *~$1.00 (Any pasta with a good amount of ridges or divots to soak up the sauce will work just fine).*

1 LB HOT ITALIAN SAUSAGE: *~$4.99 (If using mushrooms instead, I would recommend using 16-24oz of white button or cremini mushrooms, chopped finely)*

1 BAG SPINACH: *~ $2.20*

KATIE WALZ

16OZ HEAVY CREAM: *~$3.39*

6OZ GRATED PECORINO ROMANO: *~ $6.00 (The saltiness of the Pecorino Romano is hard to replicate and a worthy investment, but if you are on a tight budget, buy a cheaper Parmesan).*

BLACK PEPPER: *lots*

DIRECTIONS

1. *Bring large, covered pot of salted water to a boil. While this heats up, add your sausage to a large sauté pan and begin to cook over medium-high heat, breaking up the sausage into bite-size pieces with your spatula.*
2. *Once the sausage is fully cooked and begins to brown, add your spinach to the pan and cook until fully wilted. At this point, your water should be boiling so add your pasta and give it a good couple of stirs. Give your pasta a good, lazy stir every few minutes until it's cooked to your preferred doneness and you'll be fine.*
3. *While your pasta cooks, drop the heat on your sausage and spinach to just under medium and add your cream, making sure to scrape the bottom of the pan to get all that wonderful sausage fond off the bottom. Let this simmer and bubble, stirring occasionally, until your sauce reduces and your pasta is fully cooked.*
4. *Drop the heat to low and add in about ⅓ of your pecorino romano and a good amount of freshly-cracked black pepper. If your sauce is too thick, add in a splash or two of your pasta water to thin it out. If you're not using the cheese, make sure to add in some more salt at this stage.*
5. *Drain your pasta, add it to the pot, and stir everything until the pasta is completely covered in the sauce. Scoop into bowls and top with the remaining pecorino romano and some more black pepper.*

WELCOME TO OUR COOKING PAGE! DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE RECIPE FOR COOKING A MEAL THAT IS TASTY, HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE? WRITE US AT CONTACT@INDYPENDENT.ORG.

REVEREND BILLY'S REVELATIONS

RICHARD SWAFFORD

Dear Billy
This year's United Nations Climate Week didn't seem as big a deal. Gaza got the limelight and that's important. On the other hand, the Israeli assault is a genocide and ecocide both. What say you?

— WILLIAMS, Bed-Stuy

Dear Williams,
Why are the peace movement and the environmental movement always ships passing in the night? Right now peace and war for Americans means the devastation in Gaza and the Ukraine – with the suffering families in the foreground. But the crisis of our physical environment comes to Americans as charismatic disasters like the burning of Los Angeles. Even though much of the conflict in the world has fires and floods among its causes, and even though there is nothing worse for the Earth than war, the two movements are habitually presented as separate.

In American culture, because our conquering of the West is based on killing the Earth and natives who live with it, the climate crisis feels like "what we do." So we are not impressed by the Earth. We use the natural world as a show-room for pick-up trucks, guns, and tourist hiking. I wonder how much longer this self-censorship can go on, when so many men, women and children die each year from fires, floods and heatwaves caused by global warming.

A part of the Church of Stop Shopping's experience in traveling with Neil Young and Daryl Hannah's rock concert tour this year was to sing and preach about the Earth's crisis to large crowds who are not environmentally-inclined. Neil's followers – 20,000 people at each stop – are mostly American everymen and everywomen. Lots of families. We had a half-hour on stage, in the role of the over-the-top holy-rollers, introducing the theme of the concert, the 'love earth tour'. The script that Savitri D and I developed starts with finding common ground: "We're all in climate chaos together. We're carrying this weight all day. We don't know how to talk about it. We don't know what to say to our kids."

The fear that Savi and I share that the Earth will go all the way to mass mortality, leaves us looking for a more impactful response than our rallies and marches. If we could put the peace and environmental movements together by expressing both the murderousness of war and the global poisoning of all life, as the First Nations people do, that might finally move us to overrun the billionaire's profit-taking toxicity, their gunmen and lawyers.

We said in our show that a deep personal love of the Earth, to have that dis and re-orienting experience in nature, with somatic mushrooms, or incandescent music, or multiple orgasms in the Amtrak sleeper car, or just… deep love…. might lead us to stronger activism. We need a thorough abolition of the false categorizing that separates Peace and the Earth.

It's all the Earth, and it's all Peace. The billionaires' insistence on poisoning the air, water, soil and biosphere – and you and me – is an act of war. Right now, Gaza and the Ukraine are everywhere, but we should be able to talk of the Super Typhoon Ragasa slamming into the Philippines in the same breath.

Williams. What say you? Earth-alujah!

— REVEREND BILLY

THE CHURCH OF STOP SHOPPING HAS ITS HOLIDAY RUN AT THE QUAKER MEETINGHOUSE, 15 RUTHERFORD STREET, SUNDAYS 6PM, NOV 9 TO DEC 21.

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WEEK 1 - LIVE AT CINEMA VILLAGE (22 E 12TH ST) - VIRTUAL STARTS 10/24

SPECIAL EVENT: IBEW APPRENTICE FILMS 10/29 @RWDSU, ACTIVIST FILMMAKER BOOTCAMP 11/1 @NYU

FRIDAY 10/17 (OPENING)

We Only Want the Earth: The Life & Ideas of James Connolly - Irish Labor Activist from the early 1900s.

Doc Shorts Series (Including: Forecast, Freedom Waders, Bev Grant - A Lifetime of Liberation, and more)

SATURDAY 10/18

Raise the Roof: Building Tenant Power In Syracuse + **The Arrivals** (NYC Migrants)

LILLY - Starring Patrica Clarkson as Fair Pay activist Lilly Ledbetter. Feat. Special Guests.

Narrative/Doc Shorts Series (Heirloom, NOVA, The Last Newspaperman, Gold Status +)

SUNDAY 10/19

Baristas vs Billionaires - Unionizing Starbucks Workers

Rosinante - Turkish existential tale of job loss and personal discovery. + **Gold Status** (Deliversitas narrative)

YAPS - Young opera singers reach for their dreams amidst challenging odds. + **Language Back** (Native American heritage)

MONDAY 10/20

Without Bosses - German Cooperatives

Water Lilies - Friends in their 20s struggle to find work in South Korea.

+ Bang Bang

TUESDAY 10/21

11 Underground - Performance art recreates miners strike (Spain)

Between the Sun and the Sidewalk - Community Organizing

Afeni Shakur ... - Black Panthers

WEDNESDAY 10/22

Taken for A Ride (SF Cabbies) **+ Land of Dreams** (Immigration)

The Inquisitor - Barbara Jordan

Threads of A Revolution - Kurdish women in Syria rebuild

THURSDAY 10/23

Shorts Replay (Including: Heirloom, NOVA, The Arrivals)

Sex Work: It's Just A Job - The fight to decriminalize sex work in NYC.

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